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New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The President: Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the General Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 99 to the First Committee. To enable the General Assembly to proceed with the high-level meeting under that agenda item, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider agenda item 99 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

High-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests

Agenda item 99 (*continued*)

General and complete disarmament

Statement by the President

The President: We are here to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests. We have done this many times, but today is a first because we are meeting in the setting of a formal high-level meeting, and we have the efforts of Kazakhstan to thank for that. In opening our event today, I shall make three main points.

First, I want to point to the realities. The previous century saw massive advancements in nuclear science and technology. That has led to many benefits, but also to indescribable pain. I am not just talking about the horrific suffering of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, because the problems do not come about only when bombs are detonated.

Nuclear tests began in 1945, and since then almost 2,000 have taken place. Some of them, unfortunately, happened not that long ago. A huge price has been paid by people — through cancer, disability and death — and by the planet, from the contamination of natural resources. Our keynote speaker, Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov, has dedicated his life to warning us about those effects. Nuclear tests pose another risk as well, a political one. Simply put, they do not build trust. Instead they escalate tensions, create openings for political miscalculations and bring us closer to the brink. That is the reality when it comes to nuclear testing, and it shows why today's meeting is vital for our planet and for humankind.

For my second point, I turn to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as it offers us our best shot at making nuclear tests a thing of the past. The Treaty has still not entered into force, however, more than 20 years after its opening for signature. We need to acknowledge the near-universal moratoriums on nuclear tests, which have resulted from States' own willingness, and should be welcomed. And we need to draw hope from the developments on the Korean peninsula. But voluntary moratoriums and developments on the ground are not enough. We need a legally binding system and a clear verification mechanism, and we need the CTBT to enter into force. In that regard, I want to praise Thailand

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for its recent ratification — that is positive momentum. But I also call on the eight States whose ratifications are required for the Treaty to enter into force to do so, urgently.

For my third and final point, I turn to the situation on the Korean peninsula. Things looked bleak this time last year. Tensions were high. Rhetoric was loud. And all we were speaking about were the risks. Now we can see the opportunities. Positive steps have been taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including the suspension of its nuclear tests and launches of inter-continental ballistic missiles, as well as the closure of a nuclear test site. That came about through the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and the United States, as well as other partners.

I hope we now see more tangible action. Verification is crucial for progress, and the conditions must therefore be put in place for it to happen. There is no doubt that signing and ratifying the CTBT would lead to progress on the Korean peninsula. We all know that there is a long road ahead that will present challenges, but I hope that we have already taken the first steps.

No, we are not living in a world free from nuclear tests. But if we all play our part, do everything we can and put humankind first — and that applies to Governments, the United Nations system and civil society alike — we can see the CTBT enter into force.

I now invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: I am very pleased to be here for this important observance. Last month, I visited Japan and met with survivors of the atomic-bomb attack on Nagasaki. Through the testimony of the survivors, the *hibakusha*, we are reminded of the need to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again. On the annual observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, we highlight the inextricable connection between testing and the elimination of nuclear weapons. We also remember the victims of the disastrous era of widespread nuclear testing. The legacy of more than 2,000 nuclear tests has affected people and communities in many regions, from the residents of Semipalatinsk and the steppe of Kazakhstan to South Pacific islanders and the Maralinga Tjarutja people of southern Australia. They include some of the world's most vulnerable communities in some of the most fragile areas of the planet, from an environmental point of view.

The catastrophic impact of nuclear testing has had profound effects on the environment, human health, food security and economic development. That is why we should all welcome the robust norm against nuclear testing that has developed since the end of the Cold War, including through the voluntary moratoriums implemented by most States possessing nuclear weapons. Since the turn of the century only one State has breached that norm, and through the Security Council, the international community has responded decisively to each of its violations. But what the nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have shown is that no ad hoc measure can replace a global, legally binding ban on nuclear testing. Every effort must be made to bring about the immediate entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

As I state in *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, the CTBT has an essential role to play within the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. By constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, the Treaty puts a brake on the nuclear arms race. It serves as a powerful barrier against States that might seek to develop, manufacture, use or acquire nuclear weapons in violation of their non-proliferation commitments. Yet more than 20 years after it was negotiated, the Treaty has yet to enter into force. That failure prevents its full implementation and undermines its permanence within the international security architecture.

I reiterate the appeal I made when I launched my disarmament agenda for the remaining eight States whose ratifications are required for the CTBT to enter into force to commit to signing the Treaty and completing their ratification processes. I urge all of them not to wait for others to act before moving forward. A complete and verifiable end to all nuclear tests is a vital pillar of a world free of nuclear weapons, a safer and more secure world for all. I am convinced we can achieve that, and I am ready to provide whatever assistance is needed to attain that goal.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Before proceeding further, I should like to consult Members with a view to inviting Mr. Lassina Zerbo,

Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, and Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov, Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project, to make statements today.

If there is no objection, may I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly, without setting a precedent, to invite those speakers to make statements at this commemorative meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: In accordance with the decision just taken, I now give the floor to Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

Mr. Zerbo (Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization): Let me begin by expressing my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák for his invitation to deliver a keynote statement during today's high-level meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate and promote 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. A day against nuclear tests is meant to promote a world without nuclear tests and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). I am also pleased to share the rostrum with my good friend Karipbek Kuyukov, Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project. He is an incredible inspiration for all those who have dedicated their lives to abolishing nuclear testing as a crucial step towards a world free from nuclear weapons.

We were both in Astana last week to participate in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's 2018 Youth International Conference, along with a group of eminent persons. The five-day Conference, on the theme "Remembering the past, looking into the future", provided a platform for renowned experts in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and young leaders pursuing careers in those areas, to reflect on the history and consequences of nuclear-weapon testing. Participants also engaged in substantive discussions aimed at promoting the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as the ultimate means for ensuring that destructive practice is forever abandoned.

The adoption on 2 December 2009 of resolution 64/35, which established the International Day against Nuclear Tests, represented the culmination of efforts by Kazakhstan and many other like-minded countries to acknowledge the vital importance of the decision made by President Nursultan Nazarbayev to close the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site on 29 August 1991. More than 450 nuclear-test explosions were conducted at that site between 1949, the year of the first nuclear test by the Soviet Union, and 1989. Following the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the former Soviet Union, one of the first decisions of the newly independent Republic of Kazakhstan was to renounce nuclear weapons and transfer its inherited arsenal to the Russian Federation. That was a demonstration of bold leadership in an uncertain time and showed that a nation's national security need not be based on the possession of weapons of mass destruction. Kazakhstan's leading role in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament issues continues to this day, and we should be thankful for the example that it has provided.

First-hand accounts of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from survivors, the *hibakusha*, have helped cement in our minds the horrors of the use of nuclear weapons in warfare. Likewise, recognizing the impact of nuclear-weapon testing on populations in proximity to nuclear test sites should galvanize the international community to band together to end nuclear testing for all time. The consequences of nuclear testing for humans and the environment should always inform our collective efforts to bring them to an end, but we must also consider that a complete and verifiable ban on nuclear testing is but one step on the path towards our ultimate objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Since the dawn of the atomic age, explosive nuclear testing has constituted a critical aspect of nuclear weapon development. Nuclear testing fueled the nuclear arms race, producing increasingly sophisticated and powerful weapons that could be delivered anywhere in the world with incredible speed and precision. Thanks to the work of the dedicated scientists, diplomats, politicians and members of civil society who fought tirelessly for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, we now have in our toolbox one of the oldest and most sought-after items on the arms-control agenda. Thanks to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, we have transitioned away from a world in which nuclear tests were carried out with near-impunity.

Since the CTBT opened for signature in 1996, the world has benefited from the strongly established de facto international norm against nuclear testing, as Secretary-General Guterres mentioned today. Of the 183 States that have signed the Treaty, 164 have ratified it. Only three countries have violated this norm since

1996 and only one country has tested nuclear weapons in this century.

On the verification side, the Treaty's international monitoring system — consist ofing 337 facilities utilizing seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide technologies — has been more than 90 per cent completed to date. It has a truly global reach and is supported by the International Data Centre in Vienna, which continuously processes and analyses data. That data is shared with 1,300 institutions and more than 130 countries throughout the world. On several occasions, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty verification has proved to be more than capable of meeting the verification requirements of the Treaty; indeed, the current detection threshold is far better than many thought would be possible when the Treaty was negotiated.

The performance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty verification regime has demonstrated that no State can confidently conduct a clandestine nuclear-test explosion in violation of the Treaty without detection. For this reason and more, the Treaty is a core element of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is also a key means of advancing nuclear disarmament. An effectively verifiable, credible and foreseeable prohibition on nuclear testing must be part of any viable legal framework for nuclear disarmament. In this way, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is the most practical and necessary step towards the broader vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

While the successful negotiation and adoption of the CTBT will always be considered a hard-fought victory, complete success will elude us until the Treaty enters into force and is universalized. This is why the International Day against Nuclear Tests must be not only for remembrance and reflection, but also for a call for action. There are eight remaining States that have to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to achieve its entry into force: China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Israel, Iran, Pakistan and the United States. Given what we know about the devastating consequences of nuclear testing for humans, the environment and international peace and security, I do not think it is unfair to say that each of these countries has a moral imperative to help us to achieve a world free of nuclear tests. While the political circumstances surrounding the CTBT remain challenging, there is no doubt about the organization's technical ability to provide effective verification of a nuclear-test ban. Moreover, even before its entry into force, the Treaty's verification regime can be utilized by the international community.

I also believe that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea missed out on an opportunity to provide additional confidence on the closure of the Punggye-ri nuclear test site. While the closure of the site is welcome, the process would have benefited significantly from the involvement of technical experts in adequately assessing the activities undertaken to dismantle the site. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's tools, technologies and expertise for providing site characterization prior to the closure activity to assess the state of the site are available. They could be used even now to provide a reference point for future monitoring as part of post-site closure and dismantlement verification.

Looking back over the years since the first International Day against Nuclear Tests in 2010, one would be forgiven for harbouring a sense of despair and anxiety over the downward turn in global security and stability. Without a doubt, the world has changed. We face increasing risks and growing tensions, while cooperation and collaboration on nuclear-threat reduction at the highest political levels seem to be in short supply. Resolution 64/35 of 2009, declaring 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests, welcomes the then-recent positive momentum among the international community towards a nuclear weapon-free world. Unfortunately, that momentum, generated by a unity of vision among nations towards nuclear disarmament, has all but faded.

But should this stark reality lessen our determination or lull us into complacency? Absolutely not. As we mark the International Day against Nuclear Tests, let us strengthen our resolve and sharpen our focus. The acknowledgement that our international institutions and instruments are potentially at risk should give us all the more reason to demand urgent action. And the most sensible place to start is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty — a measure that will produce tangible benefits for humankind.

The abolition of nuclear tests will provide a basis for strategic stability and regional and global security. The Treaty's verification technologies and monitoring data are also being explored and exploited to advance scientific knowledge and our understanding of the world around us, and to help prevent and mitigate

natural disasters. These areas include tsunami early-warning systems, climate-change research, volcanic-ash alerts for air travel safety and much more.

With every signature and ratification, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty becomes stronger and the international norm against nuclear testing is further solidified. All members of our community of nations can contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security through their adherence to and support for the Treaty. Each and every ratification brings us closer to our shared objective of a universal prohibition on nuclear tests by anyone anywhere, for all time. By signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, every country helps to consolidate political will in favour not only of the Treaty but of non-proliferation and disarmament more broadly.

Participation in the Treaty and its verification regime helps enhance international technical cooperation in security areas. Saying "never" to nuclear testing through the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty strengthens the case for multilateral solutions to the transnational challenges of the twenty-first century. While Governments will ultimately make the final decision on ratification, we must also recognize the vital role of international organizations, civil society, academia and the mass media in helping to inform the discussion and shape the debate. Educational initiatives to promote awareness and understanding of the threat of nuclear weapons and the importance of tools such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to combat them must also be encouraged and supported. That is particularly true with regard to the next generation. Young people today are already helping to shape the future, and we need their help if we are to reach our goal of a world without the threat of nuclear weapons. They bring enthusiasm, determination and passion to the cause. They are conducting vital research that will shed light on political, legal and scientific issues, which will be essential in the drive to finally put an end to nuclear testing.

I appeal to all countries, large or small, that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so without hesitation, to join the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and be part of the historic movement to ensure that nuclear tests never again endanger human lives or the world's natural resources. They should help us put in place one of the most important and necessary building blocks of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The President: In accordance with the decision just taken, I now give the floor to the Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project.

Mr. Kuyukov (ATOM Project) (*spoke in Russian*): This is a very important day in my life. I would like to thank everyone who has given me the opportunity to address the Assembly today. I am speaking on behalf of all those who have survived or been killed by nuclear weapons. Everything I say today will be another reminder of Kazakhstan's bitter experience of the full horror and pain of nuclear tests.

My story about the struggle against nuclear weapons began in 1968, in the small village of Yegindybulak, 100 kilometres from the Semipalatinsk Polygon, where a boy was born without arms. On 29 August 1949, the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had decided to establish the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, where the first tests of nuclear weapons manufactured by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics were conducted. Thousands of native Kazakh families living in the test site area became hostages to radiation exposure. For the first nuclear tests, military engineers prepared a so-called test field and a nuclear charge was placed at its centre. Military equipment — tanks, aircraft and armoured vehicles — was installed not far from that epicentre. Animal test subjects — sheep, pigs and dogs — were housed in the many fallout shelters, and, of course, there were people who lived and worked around the nuclear test site for 40 years while nuclear explosions were being conducted. It was all done for research into the power of the destructive force of nuclear explosions. My family still remembers how our house shook when a radiation wave from an explosion passed under us.

As a creative person, I have expressed my pain and protest by painting pictures, holding the brush between my teeth or my toes. I recently turned 50, and I have dedicated the last 25 years of my life to the fight against nuclear weapons. Our country has a moral right to promote global anti-nuclear initiatives. I am currently an Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM project, which was established through an initiative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The efforts of President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan in that area have been met with understanding and support from the international community. Through his decree closing the Semipalatinsk Polygon, he showed the world that Kazakhstan had chosen a path of peace and virtue, a worthy example for other countries to follow.

On behalf of the victims of nuclear weapons, I would like to ask the leaders and lawmakers of countries such as Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, China, Pakistan and the United States to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to help us ensure that future generations are protected from the harmful effects of nuclear testing. The time has come to change the world for the better. Only through joint efforts will we be able to achieve a complete ban on nuclear testing. That is why the ATOM Project was created. On its website there is an online petition asking countries' leaders to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world. The number of people who have signed the petition so far stands at more than 312,000, from more than 100 countries. Our goal is to collect a million signatures. Anyone can sign the petition on the Project's website, at www.theatomproject.org, and thereby contribute to building a world without nuclear weapons.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, and Mr. Kairat Umarov, the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, for enabling me to speak about this issue once again and thereby gain the attention of the entire international community. It will undoubtedly serve as an additional impetus to advancing the common cause of a ban on nuclear testing around the world. We must learn from history's bitterest lessons about the consequences of nuclear testing and strive for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Amayo (Kenya): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States.

The African Group would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting and for your support to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to nuclear disarmament in general. We would also like to commend Mr. Lassina Zerbo, the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, and his committed team for their tireless efforts to promote the Treaty and build up its verification regime.

The fact that we are meeting here today is a demonstration of our willingness and determination to see an end to nuclear tests. To that end, the African Group supports the goals of the CTBT, the aim of which is enforcing a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests, with all their attendant ramifications. Indeed, nuclear test explosions have devastating effects on the terrestrial environment. We are all duty-bound to protect the environment by respecting the moratorium on nuclear testing as we work assiduously to achieve the entry into force of the CTBT.

The total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. In that context, the Group reiterates the urgent need for our planet, including outer space, to be free of nuclear weapons, as their presence constitutes an existential threat to global peace and the future survival of humankind. In that connection, the Group notes the 2017 award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

The African Group supports the principle of complete nuclear disarmament as the most essential prerequisite for maintaining international peace and security. In that spirit, we would like to recall here the historical adoption of the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017. We would therefore like to urge all States to support the Treaty by signing and ratifying it as soon as possible. We hope that all members of the international community, including nuclear-weapon States and those under their nuclear shield, will seize the opportunity to pursue the goal of a nuclear-free world.

The African Group looks forward to the General Assembly's fifth high-level meeting in commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September, and underscores its importance as an integral part of the multilateral disarmament effort.

The Group restates its deep concern about the slow rate of progress on the part of nuclear-weapon States towards achieving the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, in accordance with their legal obligations and undertakings under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Group therefore insists on the nuclear-weapon States' implementation of all measures and undertakings agreed to in the context of the NPT.

The African Group underscores the contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world to the overall objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, thereby enhancing global and

regional peace and security. In that context, the African Group reiterates its commitment to the Treaty of Pelindaba, which reaffirms the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and as a shield for the African territory, including by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting the testing of those weapons in the entire space that constitutes the African continent.

The African Group would also like to restate its deep concern that the commitments and obligations related to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, including the action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, have not been fulfilled. In particular, we remain deeply disappointed by the inability to convene the agreed conference on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, which was scheduled to be held in 2012.

The Group further stresses that the 1995 resolution remains an integral and essential part of the package and the basis on which the NPT was indefinitely extended, and we underline the continued validity of that resolution until its objectives are achieved. The Group reiterates its regrets that the ninth NPT Review Conference was unable to agree on a final outcome document, despite the concerted efforts of non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly in Africa. As preparations for the tenth NPT Review Conference have begun, with the first session of the Preparatory Commission held in May 2017, the Group calls on all States to work to actualize the goals and objectives of the Treaty.

The African Group underscores the inalienable right of States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and highlights the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in providing technical assistance and cooperation and maximizing the use of science and technology for socioeconomic development, as well as in monitoring States' commitments to the implementation of the IAEA safeguards agreement.

The Group stresses the importance of nuclear knowledge-sharing and the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries, including African countries, and highlights the potential contribution of nuclear energy to promoting sustainable development and prosperity across the world. The Group stresses that the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, as the main vehicle for the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, should continue to be formulated and implemented in accordance with its statute.

The Group further wishes to emphasize the importance of humanitarian considerations in the context of all deliberations on nuclear weapons, and particularly its concerns about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use or detonation of nuclear weapons, either by accident or as a deliberate action. The Group calls on all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to take into consideration the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of such weapons on human health, the environment and vital economic resources, among other things, and to take the measures necessary to dismantle and renounce such weapons.

The African Group would like to reiterate that universal adherence to the CTBT offers a way to end the further development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, thereby contributing to the goal of nuclear disarmament. The Group acknowledges the overwhelming support of the international community in promoting the entry into force of the CTBT, and calls on States that have not yet signed or ratified it, as listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, to do so without further delay.

In conclusion, the African Group once again calls on all States to work diligently to facilitate the expeditious entry into force of the CTBT in order to fulfil the goal and objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The President: I now call on the representative of Georgia, who will speak on behalf of Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Seventy-three years since the first nuclear-weapon tests, in 1945, we gather to pay tribute to the victims of nuclear explosions and reaffirm our commitment to ending nuclear testing, which is a threat to human existence, the environment and all forms of life.

The world has witnessed the tragic consequences of around 2,000 nuclear tests conducted prior to the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. Today there is no doubt that nuclear tests represent a threat to international peace and security and undermine existing non-proliferation regimes. The historic closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site 27 years ago was

an important milestone on our common path towards increased awareness of that issue.

However, in spite of all the efforts and commitments made by the international community to date, the threat of the testing and misuse of nuclear weapons is still a reality in the twenty-first century. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain our goal. The speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is vital to the effectiveness of the nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

As we commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests, we call on all States that have yet to sign or ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, particularly the annex 2 States, to do so without further delay. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, we also urge all States to refrain from conducting any action contrary to the object and purpose of the Treaty. Mindful of the dangerous developments in recent years on the Korean peninsula, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay, comply with its provisions and end nuclear testing.

Let me conclude by stressing that a safe and peaceful world should be entirely free of nuclear tests.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Oman, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Mr. Al Harthy (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am delighted to make this statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States on the International Day against Nuclear Tests. This is an important event that confirms the desire and commitment of the international community to putting an end to nuclear tests, which have terrorized humankind and caused lasting environmental damage.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting. I also applaud the statement delivered by the Secretary-General, as well as the important points made by the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. I further commend the subsequent statements, all of which agree that there is an urgent need to eliminate all threats posed by nuclear weapons, which are without a doubt the category of weapon that is most contrary to humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law.

The Arab Group underscores that the issue of nuclear weapons and the existential threat of their possession must be addressed from a global perspective with a view to completely eliminating them, along with other complementary measures such as nuclear test bans and the disposal of weapons-grade fissile material. The total, complete and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons is the major guarantee that nuclear tests will not be conducted by any country in the future.

The Arab Group believes that the continued existence of nuclear weapons and the failure to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as of other related and binding commitments that have been adopted at various NPT Review Conferences to achieve its universalization, represent a serious threat to international peace and security.

The Arab Group categorically refuses to accept the idea that the possession of nuclear weapons is important to international stability, or that the prevailing international circumstances are not conducive to making progress on implementing nuclear-disarmament commitments related to. In reality, if we look closely at the challenges currently posed by nuclear proliferation, it is clear that if we had a world free of nuclear weapons, they could have been better addressed and might not even have existed.

Once again, we call on nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their responsibilities in order to implement their agreed objectives and commitments and eliminate their nuclear arsenals in accordance with a specific timetable. That is the least that States that have conducted nuclear tests can do in order to compensate the international community for the ongoing serious damage caused by their thousands of nuclear tests.

Although the Middle East is a region of tension and instability, the Arab States have demonstrated their good intentions by acceding to the NPT and by implementing their commitments in that regard. They also actively participated in the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and continue to support the implementation of a verification regime related to the CTBT, which has made tangible progress and is even ready to be experimentally operational.

Nevertheless, the Middle East remains one of the most prominent examples of the challenges faced by the non-proliferation regime. That is due to the non-universalization of the NPT and Israel's obstinate defiance of the international community and refusal to implement the relevant international resolutions

and comply with the norms and rules set forth by the NPT. At the same time, some international Powers turn a blind eye to that abnormal situation and continue to provide Israel with a political umbrella. Such irregularities in the security system leave the region subject to conflicts and an arms race. Consequently, the Arab States are feeling unprecedented frustration at the recurrent failure to achieve the objective of making the region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the non-fulfilment of agreed commitments in that regard.

The Arab Group looks forward to the revitalization of multilateral efforts to remedy that irregularity in our region by implementing agreed commitments, in particular the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in accordance with the relevant resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT review conference; Security Council resolutions 487 (1981) and 678 (1990); and the dozens of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency in that regard.

Several recent developments, particularly the inclusion of the humanitarian commitment in many General Assembly resolutions, as well as the historic adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear weapons, which complements the objectives of the NPT and the CTBT, are clear signs that the situation has changed at the international level. Those developments send the message that non-nuclear-weapon States that are genuinely committed to the principle of denuclearization have begun to look for new ways to take serious measures to fill the gaps and address the irregularities that exist within the current disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Those States are also addressing the threats resulting from the continued possession of nuclear weapons by a limited number of countries, including the risks arising from nuclear detonations, which pose an existential threat. The United Nations must address that thoroughly in order to rid the world and future generations of those weapons. The Arab Group believes that the total elimination of those weapons is not only a realistic and achievable objective, but also a sine qua non for the lasting preservation of international peace and security.

The President: I now call on the representative of Australia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Ms. Bird (Australia): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Canada, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and my own country, Australia. We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and the Secretary-General for his statement today.

The very existence of this International Day is testament to the de facto norm against nuclear testing. The Group of Friends is committed to achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), thereby making a legal and verifiable end to the testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear devices. The CTBT is a core element of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Its entry into force will contribute to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Now with 183 signatures and 166 ratifications, the CTBT is among the world's best-subscribed treaties. We invite all Member States to join us at the forthcoming CTBT Group of Friends ministerial meeting on 27 September, where we hope to welcome news of a further ratification. Thailand's announced intention to ratify soon marks a significant regional milestone for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to celebrate, with all its members having ratified the CTBT. That sends a strong message to other regions to follow suit.

Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, we call on all States to maintain the moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions and other nuclear explosions and to refrain from any action that would undermine the Treaty's object and purpose.

In past CTBT ministerial meetings, we have consistently condemned the six nuclear-weapon tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea since 2006. In order to realize the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in a peaceful manner, we again urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with all of its international non-proliferation obligations, including the relevant Security Council resolutions. We also call on all Member States to fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions.

We welcome recent positive developments, including the April inter-Korean summit and the United States-Democratic People's Republic of Korea summit in Singapore in June. We note the 20 April announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it intended to suspend nuclear and missile

tests, and its May statement to the Conference on Disarmament that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would join international disarmament efforts for a total ban on nuclear tests. We further note the announced destruction of the Punggye-ri nuclear test site on 24 May. We now urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the CTBT as a matter of priority.

We welcome advances made by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in ensuring that the Treaty's verification regime is robust and world-class. Almost 300 certified International Monitoring System (IMS) stations are now operating worldwide. The IMS has proved its ability to promptly and accurately detect nuclear tests, and it also makes an important contribution through its scientific and civilian applications. All States signatories must remain committed to supporting the completion and maintenance of all elements of the CTBT's verification regime and related capacity-building activities.

Finally, we welcome the call in the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda to make every effort to ensure the CTBT's early entry into force. Its vital importance has only increased since its opening for signature. We urge all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, especially the remaining eight annex 2 States — China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States of America. We appeal to all States to make every effort to achieve the entry into force of the CTBT, bring a definitive end to nuclear testing and take us a step closer to our shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The President: I now call on the representative of the Philippines, who will speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Mr. Locsin (Philippines): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

We welcome Thailand's upcoming ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) later this month. The ratification of the CTBT by all ASEAN member States solidifies and bolsters our strong commitment to the international norm against nuclear testing, as well as our steadfast support to the CTBT.

ASEAN denounces the conduct of nuclear-weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, which are contrary to international efforts and norms against nuclear testing, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. We reiterate our recognition of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, which is the basis of our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. Bearing in mind the significance of the CTBT, we join others in urging annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible so as to realize its entry into force.

We reiterate our commitment to preserving our region as a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Under the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, each State party undertakes not to test or use nuclear weapons anywhere, or to allow the testing or use of nuclear weapons anywhere inside its territory. Along with that Treaty, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons provides that States parties undertake never, under any circumstances, to develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

ASEAN welcomes the inter-Korean summits, as well as the summit between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Singapore. We welcome the Panmunjom Declaration and the joint statement signed between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We urge all the parties concerned to continue working towards the realization of lasting peace and stability on a denuclearized Korean peninsula.

We welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's stated commitment to complete denuclearization and its pledge to refrain from further nuclear and missile tests during this period. We reiterate our support for all the relevant Security Council resolutions and international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, which will contribute to peace and stability in the region.

I will now add some brief remarks on behalf of the Philippines.

The Philippines joins the international community in celebrating the International Day Against Nuclear Tests. We recognize the leadership of Kazakhstan in vigorously pursuing the purposes celebrated today. We are reminded of the importance of a concerted effort

against nuclear tests, the latest of which was conducted only last year.

Recognizing the destructive effect of nuclear testing on the environment and the horrendous effects of the use of nuclear weapons — deliberately or inadvertently, in cold calculation or panic — the Philippines signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 and deposited its instrument of ratification in 2001. The Philippines continues to support the Treaty and its full ratification as soon as possible. If nuclear weapons still hold some attraction, their lethal efficacy is already proven. What need, then, is there for tests? Further testing can only mean the progressive refinement of their yield, destructiveness, dependability of delivery and targeting accuracy.

But every step forward in those respects is a step backward in nuclear weaponry's deterrent effect, which was never so great as when nuclear-weapon stockpiles were so enormous in yield and limitless destruction that no one could contemplate their use for any purpose, thereby producing the long peace of the balance of nuclear terror. That morally repugnant benefit stands to be lost by continued testing. As those weapons become more sophisticated through improvements to their capacity for discriminating use, the temptation to use them increases and the argument for their use becomes more compelling.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Adamson (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Today, at this high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, we recall that the cessation of all nuclear-weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. This meeting is an opportunity to highlight the need for the entry into force and universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was reaffirmed by Security Council resolution 2310 (2016). The fact that the Treaty has yet to enter into force is deeply disturbing, and the situation must be rectified.

We urge all States that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT, and in particular the eight remaining annex 2 States, to do so without further delay. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, we call on all States to refrain from conducting any action contrary to the object and purpose of the Treaty. In that context, we look forward to the upcoming ministerial meeting of the Group of Friends of the CTBT, to be held on 27 September on the sidelines of the high-level segment of the General Assembly. We encourage and anticipate progress with regard to signatures and ratifications of the Treaty. We welcome the fact that Thailand has completed its internal legal process to ratify the CTBT and, with the deposition of the instrument to the Secretary-General, will become the one hundred and sixty-seventh State party to the Treaty.

In accordance with several Security Council resolutions, we once again call on all States to refrain from conducting nuclear-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. The response of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) to the six nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has demonstrated its invaluable role in quickly providing reliable and independent data, something that no single country alone can do, and thereby enabling the international community to react appropriately and swiftly. The recent inter-Korean high-level talks, the Panmunjom Declaration on Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula and the joint statement issued following the Singapore summit between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are positive steps that can contribute to easing tensions on the Korean peninsula.

The EU urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage seriously in the follow-on negotiations and to take concrete steps to embark on a credible path towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization and to maintain its declared suspension of testing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Until the Democratic People's Republic of Korea takes those concrete actions, we will continue to strictly

enforce existing sanctions. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay, giving legal effect to the suspension of nuclear tests and to the statement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on its interest to "join the international desire and efforts for the total halt to the nuclear test".

The EU, as a strong supporter of the international nuclear-non-proliferation and disarmament regime, hopes that the positive momentum will bring about tangible progress, leading to the verifiable closure of the nuclear test sites of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That verification could benefit from relevant technical assistance, potentially including CTBTO expertise. The response of the International Monitoring System and the International Data Centre to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear tests confirmed that their capabilities are nearing full maturity. We therefore reiterate our full confidence in the CTBT verification regime, which has demonstrated its ability to provide independent and reliable data that will help deter non-compliance with the Treaty once it enters into force and respond to threats to international peace and security. We urge all States signatories to build all their stations and transmit their data without delay.

We recognize that even absent the entry into force of the Treaty, the monitoring and analytical elements of the verification regime are at the disposal of the international community, in conformity with the Treaty and under the guidance of the Preparatory Commission, and that such elements contribute to regional stability as a confidence-building measure and strengthen the nuclear-non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

All EU member States have signed and ratified the Treaty. Promoting its universalization and speedy entry into force is a top priority for the EU. The commitment of the EU is underscored by our seventh voluntary contribution of more than €4.5 million, approved earlier this year, which put us among the most significant financial contributors to the CTBTO, thereby enhancing its verification technologies and funding capacity-building and outreach activities. The EU and its States members also contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of the CTBT verification regime through the provision of technical support and advice at Working Group B meetings and other workshops and seminars. Regular financial contributions of our States members to the Organization amount to roughly 40 per cent of its total annual budget. We would like to remind States signatories that paying assessed contributions is not optional, and the failure to do so amounts to non-compliance with the resolution establishing the Preparatory Commission. It is essential to provide appropriate funding to all verification activities so as to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of the verification system established by the Preparatory Commission.

Lastly, the International Day against Nuclear Tests highlights the urgent need for the entry into force of this Treaty, not only as a political imperative, but also as a concrete contribution to further strengthening international peace and security.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): On behalf of the Government of Kazakhstan, I would like to express our gratitude to everyone. I believe that this represents an expression of our shared firm commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear tests, as well as our true aspiration to ultimately build a future without nuclear threat.

In the history of our common struggle against nuclear testing, 29 August is a truly symbolic day. It was on that day in 1949 that the first Soviet atomic bomb was tested at the Semipalatinsk test site, on my country's territory. Forty-two years later, the same day became a historic one, ultimately marking the end of Soviet nuclear tests. On 29 August 1991, the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, while still an official of the Soviet Union, signed a decree shutting down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. Our Polygon became the first nuclear testing ground in the world to be officially shut down. Thereafter, other nuclear test sites fell silent around the globe. The President's brave and unprecedented landmark decision became a powerful political message that inspired the world. His daring and bold vision greatly contributed to the international efforts that led ultimately to the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Today is a truly international day. It demonstrates the international community's united position on designating 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. Since the adoption of resolution 64/35 in December 2009, the world community has firmly advocated for a world without nuclear threat. Twenty-seven years have passed since Kazakhstan's momentous decision. However, more than 1.5 million Kazakh victims — one of whom, Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov, addressed the Assembly earlier — continue to live with

the horrors of nuclear tests. The serious consequences of such explosions are still visible, decades later, not only in the form of severe and incurable diseases, disabilities, genetic mutations and mental trauma, but also as environmental disasters. In observing the International Day against Nuclear Tests, Kazakhstan speaks not only for Kazakhs as victims of nuclear testing, but also for the down-winders — the *hibakusha* — of Japan, the Marshall Islands, Australia and other places where people have suffered and continue to suffer today.

What is most alarming is that we are still haunted by the continuing threat of the resumption of the scourge because the final ban has unfortunately still not come into effect. The tragic pages of Kazakhstan's nuclear history are a vivid example of the fact that nuclear weapons and their consequences are incompatible with the safe and secure future of humankind. Our story is also a clear appeal for the early entry into force of the CTBT, so that no one in the world will have to repeat and suffer our destiny again.

I would call the entry into force of the CTBT one of the clearest examples we have of mutual trust and confidence. A staggering majority of the world community has demonstrated that faith and goodwill by signing and ratifying the CTBT. We still need to see the same noble action and confidence-building measures on the part of the remaining minority, in whose hands rests the final deliverance of the world from these disastrous threats.

The ongoing positive developments on the Korean peninsula prove the relevance of this approach. We commend the aspirations and practical actions of the parties that made possible the historic summits between the two Koreas and between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We appreciate Pyongyang's commitment to stopping nuclear testing, as well as to taking practical steps to eliminate the infrastructure of its nuclear test site. We hope to see this process advance further towards the country's denuclearization and joining the CTBT. We know how serious and complicated this trajectory is and Kazakhstan is ready, if necessary, to share its time-tested and proven practical experience.

For Kazakhstan, celebrating the International Day serves not only to recall the tragic consequences of nuclear weapons but also to unite the efforts of like-minded States, civil society and individuals to build a future towards global zero. Our capital annually organizes important high-level international events in support of such global efforts.

This year, from 28 August to 2 September, Kazakhstan hosted the international Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) conference under the theme "Remembering the past, looking forward to the future". It was the first time that a group of eminent persons and the CTBTO Youth Group had gathered together to discuss the way to a common future on an intergenerational basis. It is the younger generation that should fully comprehend the importance of combating this continuing threat, for they are our future warriors on the front lines for advocacy and achieving our long-sought targets.

Moreover, on 29 August in our capital, Astana, a ceremony was held to inaugurate the Wall of Peace, a landmark memorial calling us expressly to learn and remember the lessons of history. It tells us that there is no higher ideal than respect for human dignity and prosperity for all. This is another reminder to our contemporaries and to current and succeeding generations to revere peace and never again have to relive the pages of our tragic past.

I would like to conclude with the words of my President who reminded us at that ceremony that

> "[O]ur peacemaking message is, first of all, an appeal to future generations. In every possible language, we speak to our descendants, saying 'Take care of peace, for it is the most important and priceless treasure that everyone should have on Earth'".

Today I once again call on all Member States, non-governmental organizations, civil society and every citizen of the planet to work together towards a safe and secure world. This is our most important task, strengthening mutual understanding and solidarity and launching further actions advancing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The President: Before proceeding further, given the limited time available for this meeting, I urge all speakers to kindly keep their statements as brief and concise as possible.

Mr. Kickert (Austria): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on the occasion of the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

Austria fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Nationally, let me start by commending Executive Director Lassina Zerbo for his outstanding leadership, as well as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) in general for its continued efforts and excellent work. I would also like to express our appreciation for the establishment of the CTBTO office here in New York, which has already made important contributions and outreach in furthering understanding of the CTBTO's work in the New York community.

With its international monitoring system, on-site inspections and International Data Centre, the CTBTO remains the central body with regard to verifying the norm against nuclear testing. Despite the fact that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force, more than two decades after its opening for signature, the CTBTO continues to improve its capacities and explore ways to bring its regime into full operation as soon as possible.

We warmly welcome the ratification of the CTBT by Thailand. At the same time, another year has passed without a ban on nuclear testing coming into force. That ban is a vital aspect of the international nuclear disarmament regime. Interim measures, such as moratoriums, cannot replace it. Therefore, we echo the appeal of the Secretary-General today and in his recent disarmament agenda on all remaining States whose ratifications are required for the CTBT to enter into force to commit to sign the Treaty at an early date. These States have a special responsibility to lead. I can only add, "Just do it". If we are truly committed to ending nuclear testing then we must ratify. Nice words do not count; deeds do.

While the international community continues to wait for the entry into force of the CTBT, we have seen important progress on the nuclear disarmament front. Two months ago, the Secretary-General welcomed the first anniversary of the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, on 7 July 2017, by 122 Member States — an overwhelming majority of the international community. Today, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is well on its way to entering into force. As of today, with a total of 60 signatories and 15 States parties, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is progressing faster towards entry into force than any other Treaty regarding weapons of mass destruction.

The Treaty was explicitly crafted to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to be fully compatible with the CTBT. It therefore neatly slots into the international disarmament architecture. The Secretary-General confirmed this when presenting his new disarmament agenda. He affirmed that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the NPT are completely compatible and complementary. He also pointed out that it serves to motivate opponents of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to make progress in other more limited disarmament mechanisms.

Making progress on nuclear disarmament is more urgent than ever in times of increased tensions, not least because nuclear weapons today are so much more destructive than the bombs that were dropped on Japan in 1945. The risks of nuclear weapons explosions by accident or intention have also not diminished. On the contrary, we are just damn lucky that we have been spared a nuclear catastrophe so far.

We also strongly subscribe to the Secretary-General's view that non-proliferation and disarmament go hand in hand and lead to increased security. We therefore must not delay action on disarmament under the pretext that certain conditions have to be in place first. It is especially in these times of increased tensions and the new arms race that we are witnessing that we must use disarmament and non-proliferation to start building trust and increase security for all. The CTBT, with its norm against testing, is central to that, not only by contributing to this argument and non-proliferation objectives but also by serving as an important trust-building mechanism and a way to increase security for all.

The tools to reduce insecurity and increase trust are there. Now it is up to us to make use of them and make progress towards a world free of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons, a goal to which every nation nominally subscribes. On this International Day against Nuclear Tests, let me therefore join others in calling again on the entire international community and all States Members of the United Nations to work together for a safer future for all — a future without proliferation, testing or the existence of nuclear weapons — by joining the CTBT and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. Stefanile (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union and, in its capacity as the current Chair of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission, would like to make some additional remarks.

Today's high-level meeting provides an opportunity to renew our commitment to the ultimate goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. Aware of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, we are called on to confirm our efforts for actual progress in a way that is conducive to nuclear disarmament. Italy is convinced that the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons can be attained through a progressive approach, based on concrete and verifiable measures aimed at enhancing mutual confidence and increasing the perception of solid international security. Such a process requires the substantive and constructive involvement of all relevant actors with a perspective based on the search for consensus.

Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In this connection, if the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the overarching norm on which all nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures are based, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) represents one of the pillars of the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation architecture established by the NPT. By banning any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, it counters the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and helps prevent nuclear competition.

More than 20 years after its opening for signature and despite the fact that it has not entered into force yet, the CTBT has achieved two very important goals. It has paved the way for a moratorium on nuclear tests that has been implemented by every country in the world but one and, through its related organization, the CTBTO, it has created a highly effective and fully reliable global verification regime, the invaluable role of which in quickly providing trustworthy and independent data has been repeatedly demonstrated, including on the occasion of the nuclear tests that were unfortunately conducted in 2017. But progress along the way towards disarmament and non-proliferation requires the current voluntary moratorium on nuclear test explosions to be translated into a binding norm through the entry into force of the CTBT.

Italy has always been a staunch supporter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is deeply honoured to hold the chairmanship of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission in 2018, fully supporting Belgium and Iraq, the co-coordinators of the article XIV process, in their efforts to advance the Treaty's course. Italy joins their plea to all States that have not yet done so, and in particular the remaining eight annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty.

We hope that Security Council resolution 2310 (2016), of which Italy was a sponsor, will actually encourage further ratifications, and we look forward to the upcoming ministerial meeting of the Group of Friends of the CTBT on 27 September as a further important awareness-raising event in this respect.

In this spirit, after a deeply troubling 2017, we also welcome the statement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea about its interest in joining the international efforts to achieve a total halt to nuclear tests. We hope that such a declaration may soon lead to concrete steps towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, and we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to prove its willingness to engage in credible and meaningful negotiations by returning to the NPT and signing and ratifying the CTBT.

From a purely technical point of view, the denuclearization process could also benefit from the expertise of the CTBTO. At the same time, we call on the international community to keep supporting the completion of the CTBT verification regime so as to ensure the continuous improvement of its monitoring capacity. Active collaboration between State signatories and the Provisional Technical Secretariat will be key to ensuring the timely installation, certification and maintenance of international monitoring system stations worldwide.

The current threats to global peace and security make it more pressing than ever to renew all our efforts towards the universalization and ultimate entry into force of the CTBT. Our shared commitment is crucial to reaching this goal. Each and every country has a role to play. As current CTBTO Preparatory Commission Chair, Italy invites all partners to work closely together to turn political momentum into action and eventually into reality.

Mr. Srivihok (Thailand): At the outset, I would like to align my statement with that delivered by the representative of Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

I also want to thank Kazakhstan for the initiative to declare 29 August the International Day against Nuclear Tests. This commemoration was also held at the Bangkok headquarters of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on 24 August, through the efforts of the Kazakh Embassy in Bangkok, providing an opportunity for a solemn reflection on the tragic consequences of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons across many countries and regions. I also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Lassina Zerbo and Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov for their insightful interventions and dedication to this cause.

Thailand has always firmly recognized the importance of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime and its critical contribution to international peace and security. Even though the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has yet to enter into force, it has already contributed significantly to cementing a global norm against nuclear tests and beyond.

I am therefore glad to share with Member States the news that in a few weeks' time, Thailand will deposit its instrument of ratification to the CTBT. At this juncture, I would like to recognize the international community for its support during our ratification process, as well as the support given to the State Audit Office of the Kingdom of Thailand in the discharge of its responsibility as External Auditor of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization for the 2018-2019 term.

Thailand will continue to do its part, including by contributing to the CTBT verification regime by hosting two international monitoring stations, promoting the early entry into force and universalization of the Treaty, and supporting the complementarity and mutually reinforcing nature of the CTBT and all other related instruments. That will contribute holistically to the realization of our shared goal of the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium welcomes the many statements of support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) delivered today, and fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union.

I would also like to thank Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov for his testimony. Nothing is more important on this International Day against Nuclear Tests than giving the floor to the victims before whom we are all accountable. As coordinator with Iraq of the article XIV process, Belgium is redoubling its efforts to persuade the eight annex 2 States to accede to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and ensure the Treaty's universality. A programme of initiatives to encourage States to accede to the Treaty is being implemented, with particular importance attached to the involvement of new generations and civil society, because we believe that raising awareness at every level can help to evolve positions on the matter.

Seventy-three years after Nagasaki and Hiroshima, today's meeting is an opportunity to reiterate that nuclear tests, which have a devastating and harmful impact on people's life and health and on the environment, are unacceptable. They also represent a major obstacle to fully achieving the ultimate goal of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is a world free of nuclear weapons.

A world without nuclear weapons requires a world without nuclear tests. The significant progress that has been made should be emphasized. Thanks to the normative effect of the Treaty, only one State in the world — North Korea — has conducted nuclear tests in the twenty-first century. Recent political developments in this case have given us grounds for optimism.

However, while the recent announcements made by North Korea give us hope for a world without nuclear weapons, only accession to the Treaty can provide a means for sustainably achieving that goal. Any comprehensive agreement to put an end to the nuclear crisis and achieve the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must involve an irreversible, legally binding and verifiable end to its nuclear test programme. That will be possible if the Democratic People's Republic of Korea signs and ratifies the CTBT.

Belgium encourages the States Members of the United Nations to come together around this objective as the current global security context requires us, now more than ever before, to reaffirm the objectives of the Treaty and consolidate the global non-proliferation regime. As affirmed in the preamble of the Secretary-

General's recently published *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, staying firmly engaged on these matters will ensure our shared future.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the convening of today's meeting and thanks Kazakhstan for promoting the commemoration of this International Day against Nuclear Tests, because we consider it extremely important that it can serve as a reminder of the pressing need to eliminate not just nuclear tests but nuclear weapons themselves.

Today we recall the more than 2,000 explosive nuclear tests that have been undertaken since 1945 by just eight Member States that possess nuclear weapons. We must not forget the facts or the testimonies of the victims of such tests throughout the world. We must always bear in mind the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

Prohibiting and eliminating nuclear testing is essential to preventing horizontal and vertical nuclear non-proliferation and to achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons. The parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons agreed by consensus that this would be the first systematic step towards nuclear disarmament. While we welcome the statements on the cessation of nuclear testing by some actors, voluntary moratoriums cannot replace the legally binding prohibition of nuclear tests and verification of that.

Mexico will continue to actively promote the total prohibition of nuclear testing within the General Assembly through the draft resolution we submit every year with Australia and New Zealand, as well as through a series of actions to promote the signature and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) with a view to its speedy entry into force. Mexico has always defended the importance of the CTBT as a complementary instrument to the broader regime of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Like many others this morning, we regret that the CTBT has not yet come into force, more than 20 years after its opening for signature. We therefore urge the eight States whose signature and ratification are needed for it to enter into force to accede to the Treaty without conditions and in a timely manner. Nonetheless, we welcome the technical work of the Preparatory Committee of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and of those responsible for the international verification system. Their dedication and professionalism during the interim period prior to entry into force are essential to demonstrating the impartiality, robustness and credibility of the system. As previously mentioned, the cessation of nuclear testing is but one step on a longer path towards achieving total and general disarmament.

Today we can be proud of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which includes provisions compatible with the total prohibition of nuclear testing. The elimination of tests is a significant step, but it cannot serve as a substitute for tangible advances in the fulfilment of international commitments regarding nuclear disarmament, particularly for nuclear-weapon States.

The international non-proliferation and disarmament regime should be backed and respected unconditionally by all in order to expedite the achievement and maintenance of a world free of nuclear weapons. The survival of humankind depends on it.

Mr. Itegboje (Nigeria): Let me to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this very important plenary meeting in observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests. I would also like to thank the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Mr. Lassina Zerbo, and his committed team for their tireless efforts in promoting the Treaty and in building up its verification regime.

Nigeria aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Kenya on behalf of the Group of African States.

My delegation would like to recall here the adoption of resolution 64/35, which mandated the observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests and commends the laudable initiative of the delegation of Kazakhstan. The resolution is aimed at promoting awareness of and education on the horrendous effects of nuclear test explosions and the need for their cessation, thereby providing an additional means for the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

My delegation deeply regrets the fact that 21 years after its opening for signature, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has yet to enter into force. We therefore call on those who have still not signed or ratified the CTBT, especially the eight

remaining States mentioned in annex 2 of the Treaty, to do so without further delay.

Having ratified the CTBT in September 2009, Nigeria is dedicated to promoting its entry into force, and supports all efforts aimed at sustaining and generating further political momentum, as well as the public awareness needed for its promotion and entry into force. In this regard, we share the vision on ways to advance this goal within the context of non-proliferation and disarmament in order to facilitate the attainment of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons remains an existential threat to all of humankind. The cost of maintaining and modernizing these weapons is outrageous and inexcusable when compared to the resources allocated by States to more useful and productive ventures that could further the growth and peaceful development of societies.

Nigeria underscores its concern about the slow pace of progress by nuclear-weapon States in accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their legal obligations and undertakings under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In this regard, we stress that the universalization of the NPT depends on strict compliance with its three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

My delegation seizes this opportunity to highlight once again the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (A/51/218, annex), which affirms that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law.

Nigeria reiterates its view that the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that could result from either the deliberate use or the unintentional explosion of nuclear weapons should serve as a compelling reason for all States to address the question of their continued possession. Nuclear weapons remain the ultimate agents of mass destruction, and their total elimination should be the ultimate objective of all disarmament processes within the broad spectrum of goals being pursued by the United Nations. To this end, my delegation recalls with satisfaction the adoption of the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which opened for signature on 20 September 2017.

My delegation remains proud to have participated actively in the processes leading to its adoption and to have been among the first countries to sign it. Our commitment was guided by Nigeria's principled position on the denuclearization of the world. In Africa, we have long acknowledged the existential threat posed to human existence by nuclear tests. It was to that end that African countries collectively adopted the Pelindaba Treaty, renouncing the acquisition of nuclear weapons for military purposes and declaring Africa to be a nuclear-weapon-free zone to serve as a shield for the African territory, among other things by preventing the stationing of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting the testing of such weapons in the entire space that constitutes the African continent.

Nigeria's priorities remain the civil and scientific benefits of the CTBT and its verification technologies. To this end, Nigeria takes stock of the progress made in the verification regime and would like to express its strong support for the Treaty and appreciation for the activities and work of the Preparatory Commission, including in strengthening the verification capabilities of the Treaty. My delegation is convinced that all avenues and means to end further nuclear testing will depend on the entry into force of the CTBT and its implementation.

In conclusion, we encourage the Executive Secretary, the Preparatory Commission and the Group of Friends of the CTBT to continue efforts aimed at overcoming the challenges and obtaining the signatures and ratifications necessary for the entry into force of the CTBT.

Mr. Escalante Hasbún (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I want to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to mark the International Day against Nuclear Tests, and to thank the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan for its work in that regard. El Salvador was proud to be a sponsor of resolution 72/51.

We believe that raising awareness about the effects of nuclear test explosions and any other type of nuclear explosion remains a valid concern and a problem that merits our particular attention. It is also an important step towards achieving the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. El Salvador firmly believes that disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control are essential to upholding our commitment to maintaining international peace, security and stability,

centred around respect for human rights and the potential harmful humanitarian effects of the use of such weapons.

For my country, the existence of nuclear weapons remains a serious threat to humankind. As we all know, their use, whether deliberate or as a result of human error, would have consequences so catastrophic that no State or organization would be capable of addressing. That is why, as a country that abides by international law, and pursuant to article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we welcomed the adoption and opening for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which my country was pleased to ratify on 30 July and whose entry into force we eagerly await, since it is the first instrument of international law to prohibit these types of indiscriminate weapons, the only ones not regulated by international legislation, and the most deadly. It is neither ethical, moral or logical that two types of weapons of mass destruction — chemical and biological — are prohibited under international law, while many States base their security on the existence and potential use of a third type of weapon of mass destruction that is just as devastating, if not more.

Nuclear tests serve no function other than to undermine international peace, security and stability and endanger the lives of millions of people. Moreover, they run counter to the objective and purpose of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and to the obligations and provisions contained in the NPT.

My delegation takes this opportunity, as many others have done, to reiterate the importance of and need for the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is an important, indeed indispensable component of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, together with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, other instruments already in force, and still others that for political reasons remain in the draft phase or have not entered into force.

My Government also takes this opportunity to express its concern and disappointment at the degree of divergence that characterized the discussions on the nuclear topic in the recent work of the First Committee. We hope that universal interests will prevail over individual ones when we embark on the new session in September. We also call on CTBT annex 2 States to expedite the signing and ratification of that instrument. At the same time, we urge States to refrain from preparing or carrying out nuclear tests, non-explosive tests or subcritical tests, even those conducted through simulations, and all actions aimed at developing or improving nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. My country welcomes all the efforts of the international community to put an end to nuclear tests.

Finally, we would like to give special recognition to the role that non-governmental organizations, civil society, academic entities, think tanks and the media have played, together with Governments, in promoting this goal and that of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly. We also express our deep appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres for his statement, and thank Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov, Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project, for their testimonies.

My country's delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Sultanate of Oman on behalf of the Group of African States.

History has demonstrated incontrovertibly that an arms race in all its forms is highly destructive for humankind, claims a vast number of human lives, destroys the environment and nature, and leads to suffering in many areas of life. In that regard, my Government reiterates the importance of making every effort to achieve the final and complete elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in order to build a world free of such disastrous weapons. In that way, we can secure a safe and prosperous future for us and future generations. That will require us to pool our efforts to achieve the desired goals.

There is a growing risk that terrorist groups will gain access to the nuclear technology and material needed for the production of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear terrorism is one of the most dangerous threats to international security. Strict nuclear security measures are necessary to prevent access to nuclear material by terrorists and other unauthorized entities.

As a co-facilitator, with the Kingdom of Belgium, of article XIV of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-

Ban Treaty (CTBT), my Government believes that the ratification of the eight annex 2 States is needed as soon as possible so that the CTBT can enter into force as a legal instrument to enhance the non-proliferation regime. In addition, the ratification by one of those eight States in particular, the Israeli entity, would open the way to another path that would be of interest to the international community, and specifically to the Middle East. It would also represent a step in the right direction towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We all know that the Middle East is a hotspot that needs Israel to exercise the greatest possible wisdom and reason by joining and ratifying the relevant international and legal instruments. That would help to defuse tensions, given the fact that all other parties in the Middle East have already ratified the first of those instruments, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The importance of the CTBT and the NPT lies in their three interconnected pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. They are the cornerstones of the non-proliferation regime. In addition to the political and moral obligations it entails, the entry into force of the CTBT would make it a legally binding instrument that would enhance the effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime and support efforts to establish zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, including in the Middle East.

Iraq is a co-Chair, with the Kingdom of Belgium, of the tenth Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the CTBT from 2017 to 2019. In addition, Iraq chaired the First Committee during this session. We therefore want to highlight our diligent efforts in the area of disarmament aimed at enhancing international peace and security, as well as fighting and ultimately vanquishing the terrorist gangs of Da'esh and terrorism in general.

My country's ratification of the CTBT on 26 September 2013 was based on the conviction that we must completely eliminate nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in accordance with paragraph E of article 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of Iraq. That is a clear indication that Iraq is meeting its international obligations in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, and aimed at the maintenance of international peace and security.

My Government is aware that enhancing the universalization of all conventions and treaties related to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and complete compliance with them, without discrimination, while fully eliminating such weapons, is key to the international community's ability to guarantee an end to the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction, which would help to ensure a safe and sound future for our communities and coming generations. On that basis, my country's delegation voted in favour of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted in July 2017, which we believe was the culmination of the tireless efforts of Member States over the past 20 years.

In conclusion, as a co-facilitator of article XIV of the CTBT, alongside the Kingdom of Belgium, my delegation reiterates that we are ready to cooperate with the international community to accelerate the entry into force of the Treaty so that we can establish a world without nuclear tests, thereby strengthening international peace and security.

Mrs. Rodríguez Camejo (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of today's high-level meeting and thank Kazakhstan for promoting and working assiduously to convene it.

Cuba reiterates its deep concern about the growing danger posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and their threat to the survival of humankind. It is very worrying that nuclear-weapon States have lowered the threshold for considering the use of such weapons, including in response to so-called non-nuclear strategic threats. Equally alarming is the strengthening of the role of nuclear weapons in their military defence and security doctrines, thereby accelerating rearmament and a nuclear arms race, which could put humankind on the verge of a nuclear conflict, with dire repercussions. It is worrisome that nuclear-weapon States continue to develop new nuclear-weapon systems and modernize existing ones, particularly through subcritical testing and sophisticated methods, and are considering resuming nuclear explosion tests.

In the context of the commemoration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, Cuba reaffirms its position against all types of nuclear-weapon tests — not only explosion tests but also those carried out by subcritical and other sophisticated methods. We support their total and effective prohibition, as well as

the closure and dismantling of all facilities used for such purposes and the associated infrastructure.

Cuba is honoured to have been the fifth State to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which — in addition to declaring nuclear weapons and the so-called doctrine of nuclear deterrence illegal, and providing a framework for the total and complete elimination of those weapons — also prohibits all types of tests. We encourage the signature and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons with a view to achieving its entry into force as soon as possible, as well as participation at the highest level at the meeting on 26 September to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

We have a moral responsibility to raise awareness of the threat posed by nuclear weapons and to work for a world free of those weapons, for the benefit of present and future generations. We appreciate the contribution made by the Secretary-General with his disarmament agenda, on which the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the highest priority in the area of disarmament.

Mr. Yu Peng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the President for convening this meeting. It is in the common interest of all humankind to achieve the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons, eliminate the threat of nuclear warfare and build a world free of nuclear weapons. Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) more than 20 years ago, it has become a main pillar of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation system and has made indelible contributions to forestalling a nuclear arms race, reducing the threat of nuclear war and safeguarding world peace and security.

Today the world is going through profound changes, while security challenges and risks to global strategic balance and stability are rising. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation represent a long and arduous journey. Given the new situation, all countries need to embrace a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, seek universal security and eliminate the root causes of the existence and proliferation of nuclear weapons. They must also create an international security environment conducive to the Treaty's entry into force.

It is important to consolidate institution-building, avoid double standards and jointly maintain the authority and effectiveness of the existing international nuclear non-proliferation system. Stronger political impetus is needed, in that the permanent five members of the Security Council must continue to honour their commitment to a moratorium on nuclear tests, while all other countries need to give their full and complete support to the Treaty.

China has always stood for the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons. China is committed to unconditionally adopting a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, and opposes the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. As one of the earliest signatories, China shares the object and purpose of the CTBT, abides by its commitment to the moratorium and supports all relevant General Assembly resolutions and Security Council resolution 2310 (2016). China has actively engaged in international efforts to push for the entry into force of the CTBT, and our top priority is preparing for the implementation of the Treaty. In recent years, China has made major progress in the construction, testing and certification of monitoring stations within China.

China will continue to work with all stakeholders for the early entry into force of the CTBT and to make unremitting efforts to attain the goal of the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Prasad (Fiji): I thank the President for convening this important meeting, as well as Kazakhstan, for making it happen. Fiji is grateful for the opportunity to participate today. We have witnessed the terrifying and tragic effects of nuclear-weapon testing in the Pacific region.

The issue of the total elimination of nuclear weapons has been on our international agenda since 1946, when the General Assembly adopted its first resolution (resolution 1(I)), which called for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Seventy-two years later, we are still at it. We must stay at it with renewed urgency in these troubled times until the job is done, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is ratified and in force, and all testing has ceased.

Fiji has actively joined the call for this because we know first-hand what it means to be at the front lines of nuclear testing. Between 1957 and 1958, when Fiji was still a colony, several hundred Fijian soldiers participated

against their will in nuclear-testing activities held in the Pacific. Almost all have passed away, most of them in tragic health circumstances, having been denied support and recognition by the authorities of the time. We are not alone in that. Across the Pacific, whole communities were deliberately or indirectly exposed to nuclear testing on land, sea or in the air, in highly fragile environments or in earthquake zones.

Across the region, we know first-hand what human suffering that causes. The tragedy that it causes lives with us. I remember and pay tribute to all those who lost their lives, suffered and were denied the support they so needed. The human and environmental impact of nuclear testing within the Pacific is not confined to the past. It is a persistent threat to our pursuit of sustainable development today, most notably to the Sustainable Development Goals relating to health and well-being, gender equality and the environment on land and in the oceans.

Around 300 nuclear tests took place in French Polynesia between 1966 and 1974. We are ever grateful to the Assembly, and to our predecessors who occupied these benches, for bringing the attention of the world to that tragedy in the Pacific. Fiji's radiation monitoring stations at the time detected a stratospheric fallout from the tests throughout the period. None of the countries, however, had the means to monitor the nuclear leakages from the subsea tests that followed. The health problems that many Pacific countries face as a result, and the impact on marine life and on fragile subsea structures, are largely unknown and remain insufficiently researched. We do not know the impact of warming oceans as a result of climate change. Fiji is extremely concerned about the venting and leaching of radiation from test sites.

The peoples of the Pacific and their leaders have fought hard for an end to nuclear testing and for a nuclear-free world. Fiji is party to the Treaty of Rarotonga, which formalized the nuclear-weapon-free-zone in the South Pacific and came into force in 1986. The Treaty bans the use, testing or possession of nuclear weapons within the borders of the zone.

We are honoured to have been among the first States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in 1996. We are proud to be a signatory to the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. That Treaty frames nuclear weapons as an affront to humankind, and the humanitarian, human rights and environmental effects of nuclear-weapon use and testing are therefore the responsibility of humankind as a whole. The Treaty offers a crucial new international framework for addressing the devastating legacy of nuclear testing in the Pacific. On this significant day, Fiji urges the United Nations system to use the opportunities created by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to assess the effects on health and human rights, as well as the humanitarian and environmental impact, of nuclear-weapon testing in the Pacific, and to develop action plans to address that.

Before I conclude, it would be remiss of me if I did not commend and express my appreciation to our guests, Mr. Zerbo and Mr. Kuyukov. Fiji appreciates and joins its colleagues in commending them for the leadership, wisdom and inspiration they shared with us this morning.

Mr. Carazo Zeledón (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting; the Secretary-General for his support for this cause, as demonstrated by his presence and the statement he delivered at this commemoration today, as well as his work in this area, reflected in his report *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*; and Mr. Zerbo and Mr. Kuyukov for their inspiring statements.

We meet once again for the commemoration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, remembering the victims of the terrible consequences of the testing and use of nuclear weapons. This is a new opportunity to remind the world of the danger that nuclear weapons pose to humankind, the environment and international stability and security.

We believe that today we have grounds for greater optimism, since our achievement, as an international community, of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Its adoption represents a historic milestone on the crucial path to nuclear disarmament and a sign of hope for humankind. This new instrument is also a well-deserved tribute to all victims of the use or testing of nuclear weapons, and with its adoption we bear witness to their continued tenacity and moral standing. This is a first step towards banning and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons and their unacceptable humanitarian consequences. Today, barely a year after its adoption, 60 States have signed the Treaty and 15 have ratified it. We are on the right track, and we invite

all States to finalize their ratification processes in order to reach the 50 ratifications necessary to ensure the Treaty's entry into force and thereby bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons.

The primary objective of our actions has always been the same — the ethical imperative of nuclear disarmament so that humankind will never again have to face the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons or the risks of detonation by accident or design. We have consistently rejected the false premise that nuclear weapons contribute to defence and security. Nuclear weapons have always been and will continue to be an element of insecurity for humankind. They must therefore be broadly rejected.

We also condemn the vertical and technological proliferation of nuclear weapons, which, far from eliminating the risk of a nuclear catastrophe, actually exacerbates it. That threat is incompatible with international law and especially international humanitarian law. We also want to repeat that international non-proliferation obligations must be complied with, in particular by nuclear-weapon States. We must focus our efforts on ending nuclear testing, with the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and to that end the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is essential. We again urge those States that have not yet ratified the CTBT, especially the eight States that have been mentioned this morning, to do so as soon as possible.

We reiterate our call for all of us to join together in this endeavour, especially in today's circumstances, where international peace and security depend on it. Costa Rica has always believed that this task is everyone's responsibility, and that as we have seen, persevering in this struggle is worthwhile.

Mr. Ngundze (South Africa): My delegation would like to thank the President for organizing this meeting.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Kenya on behalf of the Group of African States.

My delegation welcomes the convening of this high-level meeting to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests as a unique opportunity for the international community to highlight the dangers and threats that nuclear tests pose to international peace and security and pay tribute to the victims of nuclear-weapon-test explosions. As we commemorate this important day on the calendar of the General Assembly, it is appropriate to reflect on the current challenges and opportunities related to their realization and to the strengthening of the global norm against nuclear tests and nuclear disarmament in general.

This year's commemoration is taking place against a backdrop of deep concerns about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a nuclear-weapon detonation, whether by accident or design. Those concerns have been further heightened by the escalating horizontal development of nuclear arsenals and their means of delivery perpetuated by some States that possess them. My delegation would like to use this year's commemoration against nuclear tests to urge nuclear-weapon States and those possessing such weapons to work urgently to make progress towards the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

My delegation is of the firm view that today's commemoration should be a constant reminder of the importance of the entry into force and the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a cornerstone of our collective endeavours to prevent both the vertical and the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, and as a solid foundation for the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. In that context, we want to join the sentiment that has been shared during this meeting by expressing our concerns about the lack of progress in the ratification of the CTBT, in particular by the eight remaining annex 2 States, which has been mentioned by many speakers this morning. South Africa believes that a failure to bring the CTBT into force will weaken and undermine the nuclear-non-proliferation and disarmament machinery and thereby deal a heavy blow to the international community's quest for a world free from the threat of nuclear devastation.

We have repeatedly expressed our view that until the CTBT has entered into force, it is essential for countries to continued to observe a moratorium on nuclear explosions, but that moratorium should not seek to become a viable long-term substitute for a legally binding commitment. South Africa will continue to play an active role in the work of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) both from a technical and political perspective.

In conclusion, South Africa commends the work of the Executive Secretary, His Excellency Mr. Lassina

Zerbo, and his team, in Vienna and New York, for their tireless efforts to promote the universalization of the Treaty and ensure that the work of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission continues unabated despite the existing challenges.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): First of all, we would like to align ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of the Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

As a prelude, I would like to echo the very important point that the Secretary-General made in his message earlier this morning:

> "The catastrophic impact of nuclear testing has had profound effects on the environment, human health, food security and economic development."

That point was also echoed a few moments ago by my colleague the Permanent Representative of Fiji, when he said that the nuclear testing in the Pacific in the past was a threat to sustainable development. We share that very important view.

The building of global political momentum against the testing and possession of nuclear weapons and for their complete elimination is a joint responsibility about which we must be clear and resolute. There can never be a moral justification for testing or retaining those immoral weapons. As we remember that crucial message, let us intensify the effort to refrain from conducting nuclear tests and to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world through concrete actions and policies.

One might have thought that in the wake of the devastation heaped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the more than 2,000 nuclear tests conducted in the ensuing 70 years, with their unacceptable human, environmental and economic costs, that such test explosions would no longer exist. That is not the case. Some realities are very grim. Despite the multilateral instruments we have against nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons have been modernized, with greater zeal for such weapons on the part of some. Not so long ago, the international community witnessed reckless threats of the use of nuclear weapons. The desire for confrontation has been greater than the desire for adherence to global norms, responsible dialogue and disarmament.

Indonesia is concerned about those negative trends. As a country that long ago decided to choose the non-nuclear-weapon path, Indonesia urges States that possess and test nuclear weapons, along with those States under nuclear security umbrellas, to fulfil their disarmament obligations. They have a higher responsibility to meet their commitments and foster a peaceful and safe international climate. It cannot be a one-way street. Disregard for disarmament commitments invites proliferation risks and fatal instability.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an essential building block for a nuclear-weapon-free world. It should be expedited. Indonesia has fulfilled its responsibilities, including ratification of the CTBT. We call on the remaining annex 2 States to fulfil theirs. There should be a cessation of all nuclear-weapon testing, along with their complete prohibition and elimination of such weapons. Our Earth must not be forced to suffer further environmental damage and radiation from nuclear weapons. In that context, last year's historic adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons also manifests strong international resolve. We need to all play our role to help universalize it.

It would be remiss of us not to commend the vital activism of civil-society groups in expanding awareness on the dangers of nuclear-test explosions. Their contribution is indispensable. Indonesia also thanks the Secretary-General for presenting *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*. Its advancement will also bolster political advocacy against nuclear testing.

Let me conclude by reiterating that our respective actions and policies should ensure that today's message is carried forward robustly. This is not about a single day, but an ongoing process that requires vigorous contributions and support from all stakeholders. Indonesia, for its part, will continue to engage with everyone to help ensure that the multilateral edifice concerning nuclear tests, disarmament and non-proliferation stands strong and delivers. A nuclear-weapon-free world is freedom, including from an apocalypse. Let us all be free.

Ms. Mac Loughlin (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this high-level meeting of the General Assembly and for the opportunity it offers Member States to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests. I would also like to express my gratitude for the presence and participation of the Secretary-

General, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and, in particular, the artist Karipbek Kuyukov, whose words have moved us and prompted us to reflect.

The commemoration that brings us together today, on the anniversary of the closing of the Semipalatinsk Polygon nuclear test site, on 29 August 1991, is an excellent opportunity to reflect on the devastating effects of nuclear tests and the importance of eliminating them comprehensively and absolutely unconditionally. We therefore congratulate the delegation of Kazakhstan on the new impetus given to the commemoration of this day through the adoption of resolution 72/51, on 4 December 2017.

While we welcome the high-level dialogue initiated by the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we believe that the only viable solution is the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner.

More than 20 years have passed since the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Although it is a key element of the non-proliferation system, we have not yet achieved the ratifications required for its entry into force. There can be no doubt that we should redouble our efforts in seeking and developing resources that will bring us closer to that goal. We agree with the view espoused by the Secretary-General in *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, which says that for the norm against nuclear tests to retain its robustness, the institutions that underpin it must enter into force without further delay.

The CTBT is a crucial tool for curbing the manufacturing and modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new prototypes. However, until it enters into force, there is no legally binding instrument that fully bans such tests. Although the suspension of nuclear tests adopted by the five permanent members of the Security Council aims to have a positive impact on matters concerning non-proliferation, it cannot be considered an acceptable substitute for the CTBT's entry into force.

Argentina is deeply committed to strengthening and optimizing the International Monitoring System and the International Data Centre of the CTBT. In that regard, Argentina hosts six monitoring stations within its borders and is planning to set up two others in the future. The Treaty's International Monitoring System is of the utmost importance to my country, which believes that prohibition must always be complemented by a robust verification system. Thanks to the CTBT's International Monitoring System, the chances today that any one country could carry out nuclear tests secretly, behind the international community's back, are highly unlikely. The tremendous political, legal and economic efforts that have been made must therefore culminate in the Treaty's entry into force. In that regard, as it has done historically, the Republic of Argentina will continue advocating for the CTBT's speedy entry into force, while urging States that have yet to ratify it to reconsider their positions so as to contribute to building a safer world.

Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate and are grateful for the statements delivered by the President of the General Assembly; the Secretary-General; Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; and Mr. Karipbek Kuyukov, Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project.

As a pacifist and non-nuclear-weapon State, Uruguay has a deep-rooted tradition of advocating for universal and complete disarmament. In addition to other international instruments, my country is party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Uruguay believes that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a key component in the disarmament and nuclear-non-proliferation regime and contributes to strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In 2016, Uruguay voted in favour of Security Council resolution 2310 (2016), which commemorated the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and promoted its universalization and entry into force.

Today's meeting helps raise awareness of the effects of nuclear explosions and the need to end them, and recalls the importance of ensuring that the CTBT enters into force without further delay, which would be a crucial step in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation, both horizontally and vertically.

At the same time, the Treaty is vital to preventing the contamination of the environment caused by radioactive substances and the consequent detrimental effects on health and ecosystems. We therefore call once again on the remaining eight States listed under annex 2 to the Treaty that have yet to sign or ratify it to do so, in order not to delay its entry into force any longer. We also call on the international community to continue to comply with the Treaty's principles and obligations, despite the fact that its entry into force is pending, as it is essential to respect the moratorium on nuclear-weapon or any other nuclear explosions. We also believe that it is important to stress the fact that at the recently held international conference on nuclear non-proliferation held in Astana, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was brought up in connection with its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and the existing link between disarmament and development.

The commemoration that brings us together today is a fitting occasion for reiterating Uruguay's firm commitment to strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Accordingly, on 25 July, Uruguay deposited its instrument of ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, becoming the thirteenth country to ratify that important instrument. In its relations with other States, Uruguay favours cooperation, mutual trust and transparency over confrontation, distrust and the build-up of armaments. In that spirit, and in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and under international law, Uruguay is determined to continue to work towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, thereby continuing efforts to achieve the goal of universal and complete disarmament. That is the only way we can strengthen international peace and security and move forward on a path towards building a safer world for all.

Mr. Giacomelli da Silva (Brazil): The delegation of Brazil would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting, and the Secretary-General for his statement. We would also like to congratulate the delegation of Kazakhstan on its efforts to raise awareness of this important date by introducing the draft resolution that became resolution 72/51. Brazil extends its appreciation to Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo for his tireless efforts and leadership in promoting the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its continued international relevance. We would also like to express our appreciation for the important work carried out by the Provisional Technical Secretariat in building up the verification regime and carrying out efforts aimed at its universalization. The credibility of the CTBT verification system ensures the Treaty's continued relevance.

Brazil reaffirms its condemnation of any kind of experiment aimed at developing or modernizing nuclear weapons, through explosive tests or any other means, including subcritical tests. Such activities are contrary to the purpose and the spirit of the CTBT. More than ever, significant steps are needed to ensure the entry into force of the CTBT, an end to all forms of nuclear tests and the total and irreversible elimination of all nuclear arsenals within a specified time frame. A genuine undertaking to live up to the CTBT's goals is essential to the credibility and sustainability of the nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. We must redouble our efforts to explore all avenues towards accession for the remaining eight annex 2 States. In that regard, I want to affirm our sincere appreciation for the work of the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Belgium and Iraq in coordinating the article XIV process in Vienna.

A little more than a year ago, we witnessed a breakthrough in the international nuclear-disarmament agenda. The conclusion of the negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was a victory for principled hope over apathy and equivocation. The humanitarian consequences resulting not only from the use but also from tests involving nuclear weapons contributed to raising awareness of the importance of the Treaty. The conviction that led Brazil to be the first country to sign the Treaty continues to guide our unwavering commitment to the Treaty and the values it represents. Only by prohibiting nuclear weapons and providing for their transparent, verifiable and irreversible elimination can we confidently look forward to a future when they will never be employed again, under any circumstances, by any actor.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I thank the President for convening this meeting. I would also like to join other representatives in thanking Kazakhstan for its efforts with regard to the observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests. The courageous decision by the Government of Kazakhstan to close down all nuclear test sites on its

territory was undoubtedly a bold and exemplary step in the right direction.

Today we are commemorating the victims of nuclear tests, the people who have suffered and, thanks to the long-lasting nature of radioactive fallout, will continue to suffer from the devastating effects of nuclear tests, and most of whom were not citizens of the countries that carried out those tests. The observance of this Day is also an indication of the international community's willingness to protect the environment against the destructive effects of such tests, most of them carried out outside the territory of the countries conducting them. Moreover, the observance of this Day as an international event is a reflection of the international community's long-standing desire to end nuclear-weapon tests as one of the requirements of achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

At a time when all nuclear-weapon possessors have plans to further modernize and upgrade or extend the lives of their nuclear weapons and related facilities, as well as to develop new nuclear weapons that are easier to use, ending nuclear-weapon testing is of the utmost importance. Nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility in that regard, and they should adopt practical measures to stop all nuclear-weapon tests. As a signatory to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Islamic Republic of Iran firmly believes that all nuclear-weapon tests in any form must be strictly prohibited, including through simulation using supercomputers and subcritical testing.

In conclusion, I want to stress that pursuing the noble objective of halting nuclear-weapon tests is our common responsibility, whose realization requires our perseverance, steadfastness and unity. Let us remain resolute along that path and remain confident that it is not impossible.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): We thank the President for convening this high-level event to commemorate and promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests. We appreciate the insights shared with us by the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project.

Following five decades of struggle against nuclear testing, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was humankind's first hopeful step towards a comprehensive, globally verifiable non-proliferation regime banning any and all nuclear testing. In 1996, within 30 days of its adoption, Bangladesh, an annex 2 State, demonstrated its full faith in the CTBT when it became the first Member State from South Asia to sign and ratify the Treaty. Bangladesh remains robustly bound by its Constitution to pursue the goal and guarantee of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We remain convinced that nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence and the honing of nuclear weapons have no place in our national security or foreign policy architecture. That also guided Bangladesh's recent decision to sign on to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Bangladesh joins the 166 States parties to the CTBT in urging Member States that have yet to sign or ratify the Treaty to do so without further delay. We are heartened by Thailand's decision to ratify the Treaty. The non-ratification of the CTBT by the eight remaining annex 2 States continues to hinder its entry into force and prevent the permanent banning of nuclear tests conducted by anyone, anywhere. Unlike unilateral, voluntary moratoriums on nuclear testing, we consider the Treaty's entry into force to be the only guarantee of a legally binding non-testing regime. We support the Treaty's article XIV process to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT and look forward to further pursuing the issue at the upcoming meeting on the margins of the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. We thank the Secretary-General for reaffirming the importance of the CTBT's entry into force in his recently published *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*.

We welcome the advances made by the CTBTO in building a strong verification regime by developing and effectively maintaining a system capable of quickly, reliably and precisely detecting nuclear explosions and suspicious events anywhere — in the air, the sea or underground. Bangladesh hosts an auxiliary seismic station and remains committed to further strengthening the verification regime.

In conclusion, Bangladesh welcomes the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it plans to halt nuclear testing and hopes the announcement will pave the way for the comprehensive, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. In that context, we appreciate the various high-level diplomatic engagements and pronouncements, and we emphasize following up on them in order to reach the desired end.

Mr. Prieto (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank the President for convening this meeting to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

Peru is party to all the existing multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. They represent one of the pillars of our foreign policy and attest to our determination to achieve international peace and security through general and complete disarmament. In line with our principled position, we were one of the promoters of the establishment of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world, via the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and we have signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Our firm position led us to become one of the first States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as well as the second annex 2 State to implement it. The CTBT is a key instrument in the context of international efforts to gradually reduce the number of nuclear weapons and prevent nuclear proliferation, which is why its entry into force should not be delayed.

Since the first nuclear test was carried out, in 1945, there have been almost 2,000 such tests. Although at the time the possession of nuclear weapons was considered to be a demonstration of scientific sophistication and military power, without consideration for its devastating effects on human lives, the international community today is aware that, of all weapons, nuclear weapons are the most destructive, inhumane and indiscriminate.

What does not exist can do no harm. Nuclear weapons should simply not exist. My country will continue to work to ban such weapons in all circumstances and to eliminate them in order to prevent their attendant humanitarian impact. In its awareness of and commitment to that goal, my country actively participated in the negotiations that led to the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We stated our objection to nuclear tests and to all strategic concepts of defence and security that justify the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

We emphatically condemn the nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its repeated illegal launches of ballistic missiles, which are in clear violation of Security Council resolutions and a threat to international peace and security. We also reiterated our support for a negotiated political solution to denuclearize the Korean peninsula during our participation in the Security Council.

Peru is aware that in recent years we have made progress in various areas covered by the Treaty that are essential to its implementation. Nevertheless, almost 22 years have elapsed since its adoption and the Treaty has not yet entered into force. We must take on that task and responsibility, given its importance to all humankind.

We would be remiss if we did not call on all States whose signature or ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force to fulfil their obligations, and we express our willingness to enact every measure necessary to ensure its implementation as soon as possible.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Monsignor Grech (Holy See): The Holy See has called for a total ban on nuclear weapons since the dawn of the nuclear age. In February 1943, two and a half years before the Trinity test, Pope Pius XII had already voiced deep concern regarding the violent use of atomic energy. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki, upon observing the totally uncontrollable and indiscriminate consequences of nuclear weapons, Pope Pius XII demanded an effective proscription of atomic warfare. The Holy See echoes the cry for humankind to be freed from the spectre of nuclear warfare, and therefore actively supports all initiatives that contribute toward a world free of nuclear weapons. Banning nuclear tests is a giant step to that end.

Today's commemoration and promotion of the International Day against Nuclear Tests is an important affirmation of our common determination to create the necessary conditions and steps towards the legal proscription of nuclear tests. For that reason, the Holy See continues to call for the rapid entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). When the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty met in 2003, 168 States had signed and 104 States had ratified the Treaty. Today, 183 States have signed and 166 have ratified it. Those numbers show that the great majority of States want the CTBT to enter into force in order to put an end to nuclear tests. Its entry into force would be a significant step towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Yet that step is impeded by the lack of universality. The Holy See therefore adds its voice to the appeal to States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty. Twenty-two years have passed since

the Treaty was opened for signature and ratification. The entry into force of the CTBT can happen only if mutual trust exists, especially among those States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty's entry into force. Disarmament treaties are more than just legal obligations; they are also moral commitments, based on trust between States and rooted in the trust that citizens place in their Governments. All must contribute to building and consolidating the trust necessary for a world free of nuclear weapons. The entry into force of the CTBT will be a cornerstone of the mutual trust we need.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 99.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.113

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

113th plenary meeting
Monday, 10 September 2018, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 13 (*continued*)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Draft resolution (A/72/L.68)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Eswatini to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.68.

Mr. Masuku (Eswatini): It is once again an honour to introduce, on behalf of the Group of African States, the draft resolution entitled "Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2030" (A/72/L.68).

In recent times, there has been a lull in the gains made in the battle against malaria. After many years of impressive reductions in the global malaria burden, the World Malaria Report of the World Health Organization has noted a worrying trend in the data, and progress has levelled off. Hence the need to redouble our efforts. That highlights the importance of the draft resolution that we are introducing here today, as it speaks first to the need to consolidate the gains made in the fight against malaria and subsequently to accelerate efforts leading to the eventual elimination of the disease by 2030. It is therefore critical that we focus on increasing our efforts in the battle that we are facing.

I am therefore pleased to inform the General Assembly that there have been some technical updates in the 2018 draft resolution and some new paragraphs introduced highlighting current developments. Some of the most noteworthy include, first, the decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its thirty-first ordinary session, which endorsed the "Zero Malaria Starts with Me" campaign in July; secondly, the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, held in London in April, at which member States committed to halve malaria in the Commonwealth countries by 2023, including the pledge by stakeholders to raise $4 billion in commitments to malaria control and elimination; and, lastly, the recognition that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a primary multilateral funder for malaria control and elimination, and that continued progress on malaria elimination will rely, inter alia, on the successful replenishment of the Global Fund.

The aforementioned speaks to the call by the Group of African States, during the introduction of resolution 71/325 on this topic last year, for funding to be increased so as to enable efforts to continue to progress unhindered. As representatives of a region acutely affected, we are grateful for the new commitments made, as they will address the funding gap that had been previously identified as a source of concern. We renew the call for widening the scope of funding that is available for the fight against malaria and broadening the base for sourcing funds by the Global Fund to ensure continued support of our initiatives.

In conclusion, allow me to express our gratitude to the representatives who participated in consultations on

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the draft resolution for their engagement, constructive contributions and spirit of compromise. Further appreciation goes out to the sponsors of the draft resolution, and we invite other delegations to join in the sponsorship. We look forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus as in previous years.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.68, entitled "Consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2030".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/72/L.68, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Monaco. Myanmar, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.68?

Draft resolution A/72/L.68 was adopted (resolution 72/309).

The President: I now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position.on the resolution just adopted.

Ms. Eckels-Currie (United States of America): The Government of the United States remains honoured to be a part of the massive and concerted global effort to end malaria and its devastating impact on individuals and communities. Progress over the past 15 years has indeed been remarkable. Malaria is no longer the leading cause of death in children under five years of age in Africa, and several countries are transitioning their programmes from focusing on controlling the disease to eliminating it. Yet that process is fragile and has not been, and will never be, linear. The United States Government recognizes that sustained support over time is necessary. The United States Government has committed more than $6.8 billion bilaterally for malaria control and elimination through the United States President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). In addition, approximately one third of the United States $15.6 billion total commitments to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria benefits malaria-endemic country programmes. Launched in 2005 in only three countries, the PMI now supports 24 programmes in malaria-endemic countries in sub-Saharan Africa and three programmes in the Greater Mekong subregion in Asia, where resistance threatens the efficacy of antimalarial drugs.

In joining the consensus on the adoption of resolution 73/209, the United States commends the efforts and commitment of Member States resolved to eliminate malaria and applauds their progress to date, urges Member States to sustain their political commitment and funding, and recognizes the threats posed by resistance to insecticides and anti-malarial drugs. We acknowledge progress made in parts of Africa and Latin America, especially in the following countries, which have most recently been certified malaria-free or are poised to receive certification in the near future: Paraguay, El Salvador and Argentina. The United States Government also acknowledges the progress made by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the South-East Asia region, where eight of the nine malaria-endemic countries are on target to achieve at least a 40 per cent reduction in case incidence by 2020, and India is on track to achieve a reduction in the range of 20 to 40 per cent.

The United States shares the view expressed in the resolution recognizing the need to strengthen malaria surveillance and data quality and urges the global malaria community to use data to make evidence-based decisions. Given the influx of data and the advancements in the development of new malaria-control products, the United States Government stands ready to work with the WHO and other institutions to ensure that global technical recommendations evolve at a pace with incoming data and advancements in research and development. Regarding the right-to-health language contained in paragraph 22 of the resolution and in the light of article 2, paragraph 1, of of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the United States interprets references to the obligations of States as applicable only to the extent that they

have assumed such obligations. We note that countries have a wide array of policies and actions that may be appropriate in promoting the progressive realization of the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Finally, as we have stated for several consecutive years, it is not appropriate for a United Nations document to speak to ongoing or future work of the WTO, or to undermine the independent mandate and processes of the WTO. The discussion in paragraph 34 of the resolution of the amendment to article 31 of the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights is imbalanced and biased, and it is inappropriate for the United Nations to call on WTO members to take action on that issue. Therefore, as was the case last year, the United States must disassociate itself from paragraph 34, and we insist that the inclusion of that language in the resolution not serve as a basis for future negotiations.

We find it unfortunate that so many negotiations have been stalled by the same issues around intellectual property, which unnecessarily inflames the discussion of serious health challenges. This year's resolution on malaria highlights the way in which some countries have chosen to pursue other agendas, even when they have little or no relevance to the topic at hand. In the case of malaria, we note that for the anti-malaria medicines on the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines, there is not a single patent in a single country that is still in force. It therefore defies logic to assert that intellectual property can be a barrier to access to those anti-malaria medicines.

On the other hand, intellectual property is essential for the development of new medicines, including the new medicines we will need in order to treat malaria when resistance develops to current regimens. The United States is therefore concerned that the threat or use of compulsory licensing will choke off the research and development that will be needed to save lives in the future. We request that this statement be made part of the official record of the proceedings of tnis meeting.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position after the adoption of resolution 72/309.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 13?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 66 (*continued*)

New partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Draft resolution (A/72/L.57/Rev.1)

Draft amendment (A/72/L.71)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.57/Rev.1.

Ms. Elgarf (Egypt): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly the draft resolution entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", as contained in document A/72/L.57/Rev.1.

The value of the draft resolution cannot be overstated, because it highlights the progress made by African countries in the implementation of their various development programmes and projects supported by development partners. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) draft resolution provides an insight into how far Africa has come since the previous resolution on the topic was adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 71/320) and places the spotlight firmly on those areas that need support in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In many ways it provides a record, year-on-year, of what Africa has achieved.

The draft resolution also reaffirms the importance of international support in development. Progress in development and support for development are two vital aspects that ensure the implementation of the ambitious objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are linked to the African Union Agenda 2063 and, we believe, will ultimately empower our continent and its people to eradicate poverty. May I take this opportunity to recall that Agenda 2063 sets out the blueprint for development in Africa until the year 2063, and that it is divided into 10-year implementation plans. NEPAD and this draft resolution speak directly to that development nexus.

This year, in the drafting process of the text, we saw greater openness aimed at streamlining the text and at rendering it more focused. However, we believe that there was too much emphasis on shortening the text, which could lead to the result that the substance is not completely addressed. NEPAD is an important reflection of the responsibility accepted by African countries for their own economic and social development. A strengthened and positive balance between the actions by African Governments and the response of the international community should be acknowledged and supported by being reflected in the draft resolution. Herein lies the much-needed stability that is fundamental to addressing the special development needs of the continent.

Instead of support for this important balance, we have unfortunately seen what can be regarded only as deliberate attempts to significantly weaken this year's draft resolution. The Group believes such an approach is contrary to the sentiments outlined in the 2030 Agenda, which perfectly complements the African Union Agenda 2063. This draft resolution seeks to emphasize the coherence and coordinated implementation of both Agendas. They must be seen within a single context.

This year's draft resolution underlines the importance of creating a domestic environment that is conducive to encouraging entrepreneurship and the formalization of informal sector activities. It also calls for investment for the express purpose of promoting a transparent, stable and predictable investment climate. Those aspects are among those required to strengthen good governance on the African continent, leading to what paragraph 4 of the draft resolution refers to as

> "proper contract enforcement and respect for property rights, embedded in sound macroeconomic policies and institutions".

The fundamental importance of foreign direct investment, which is a major source of financing for development, and the need to broaden and strengthen the voice and participation of developing countries in international platforms are also well outlined in this draft resolution. We note that the draft resolution speaks of official development assistance, calling for developed countries to meet their commitment of 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to official development assistance, with 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national income going to least developed countries. Furthermore, the draft resolution speaks of international trade as an engine for inclusive economic growth and calls for coherence in trade policies towards African countries. The draft resolution also calls for capacity-building and assistance in meeting the challenges brought on by trade liberalization.

I would like to add, however, that we would have liked to have seen more on the concerns relating to official development assistance to Africa, and particularly Africa's disproportionately low share of the volume of international trade. The draft resolution welcomes the progress made by African countries in fulfilling their commitments in the implementation of NEPAD and towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One area of progress happily highlighted in this draft is that of agriculture. The Group regrets, however, that more was not said of the progress made by African countries in that regard.

Another area that has been highlighted includes explicit examples of progress, in particular through collaboration among African countries to promote innovative public-private partnerships for the financing of infrastructure projects. We hope that this aspect will not be watered down in future draft resolutions. The Group hopes to see a strengthening of examples that prove that Africa as a whole is on the right path.

As a Group, we are open and willing to work on a continued process aimed at developing forward-thinking concepts and at polishing the specificities of such issues, such as supporting the creation of an inclusive industrial sector; enhancing capacities to strengthen national health systems; augmenting the level of resilience against challenges posed by climate change, drought, land degradation and desertification; and many other matters that impede the achievement of our common goals.

In that regard, the Beijing Declaration and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021), adopted by the African countries and China at the recently held 2018 Beijing Summit of FOCAC, covering fields such as industrial promotion, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, health care and green development, give strong impetus to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

The Group of 77 and China's fundamental objective with this draft resolution and others is to be able to reach consensus. The Group is gravely concerned that a draft resolution aimed at enhancing Africa's sustainable development and which demonstrates

progress being made in Africa is being subjected to a vote in the General Assembly. We call on all Member States to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the representatives of Algeria and Angola for their commendable efforts and roles as coordinators on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I would also like to thank the representative of South Africa for her role in facilitating the consultations on the draft resolution and her outstanding outreach aimed at presenting a well-balanced text to be considered for adoption.

Before I conclude, allow me to make an oral revision to the twelfth preambular paragraph, namely, to change the word "recalling" to "welcoming". This oral revision has been communicated to all Member States. I also wish to express my thanks to all delegations for their efforts aimed at constructive commitment and participation, as well as to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for its support throughout the entire consultation process.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.71.

Ms. Eckels-Currie (United States of America): I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.71.

Since the development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the United States has noted that a certain Member State has consistently sought to insert language promoting win-win cooperation or mutually beneficial cooperation as a model of development cooperation in many draft resolutions across a range of issues that affect development cooperation. In 2015, when the SDGs were developed, that concept did not have a clear meaning beyond its generally accepted colloquial use in English.

Over the past three years, however, the United States has become increasingly concerned about the consequences of including such language, particularly as part of an effort to privilege that form of development cooperation over other models. Our concerns are that the practical effect of promoting that mode of development cooperation is to establish a quid pro quo between developing countries and their development partners whereby a development actor expects to gain some tangible benefit from cooperation in exchange for its assistance to the developing country. That type of development cooperation is contrary to best practices, including those set out in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's guidelines on development cooperation.

Such conditional assistance is also the antithesis of the kind of effective, sustainable partnerships that the United States, like-minded donors and our development partners, including those in Africa, have worked to build for decades. We are concerned that, rather than supporting truly sustainable development, that so-called win-win model leads to unsustainable debt levels, corruption, poor development outcomes and, in worst cases, the forfeiture of critical national assets that should be available to contribute to the long-term economic health and sustainable development of a developing country.

The draft amendment proposed by the United States is a straightforward and small change that would help achieve the goal of restoring balance to the draft resolution and end the effort to privilege a certain form of development assistance over all others. To that end, the United States urges all Member States to vote in favour of the United States draft amendment changing the words "win-win" to the word "international", and the United States hopes that the amendment will enjoy the support of all Member States that believe that sustainable development should be the goal of the draft resolution (A/72/L.57/Rev.1) on the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.57/Rev.1, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", and draft amendment A/72/L.71 to the draft resolution.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/72/L.57/Rev.1, Turkey has also become a sponsor of draft resolution A/72/L.57/Rev.1.

The President: In accordance with rule 90 of Assembly's rules of procedure, the Assembly will first take a decision on the proposed draft amendment circulated in document A/72/L.71.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken

In favour:

Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cote D'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Norway, Tuvalu

The draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.71 was rejected by 46 votes to 106, with 4 abstentions.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.57/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cote D'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Dominican Republic, United States

Draft resolution A/72/L.57/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 159 votes to 2 (resolution 72/310).

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, also align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, we would like to thank the delegation of South Africa, as the facilitator of the negotiation process on the New Partnership for Africa's Development; Egypt, the holder of the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China; and Algeria and Angola, which represented the Group of 77 and China in the informal consultations. Allow me to commend the work of the facilitator and colleagues representing the groups and members for reducing the length of resolution 72/310. That is a step forward, and the European Union and its member States engaged constructively on the resolution on that basis.

While the European Union and its member States joined the consensus on this resolution today, we also take note that some concerns were not reflected in the final text, which remains declaratory and devoid of the operational dimension that would make a real difference for the lives of people in Africa and their partners. As we have said repeatedly, we have three core documents that we all agreed on in 2015: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development; and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. We must now focus on the implementation of those political commitments. That means transforming the work we do here in New York so as to modernize other resolutions, with a sharp and clear focus on results.

Instead, in this resolution we see new, additional and vague concepts imposed on the membership. I refer to paragraph 28. We do not believe that slogans will move us closer to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda or Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The concept of win-win cooperation has changed substantially from the time it was inserted in the 2030 Agenda, becoming a development cooperation tool that calls for mutual economic gains and takes precedence over the sustainable development needs of the receiving countries. We reject that notion and the concept behind it.

Furthermore, regarding paragraph 55, our quest for a more coherent and focused agenda on development-related issues in the United Nations is not new. It is part of the need to revitalize an agenda that is growing in size, burden and irrelevance. This resolution is, unfortunately, a clear example of the occasions to make a difference here in the United Nations that we have missed. Over 90 per cent of its content could have easily and more appropriately figured in the preambular paragraphs. In that sense, this year's resolution is not different from last year's (resolution 71/320), which in turn was not different from the previous one. While it has been adequately updated, this resolution does not need to be and should not be submitted on an annual basis. That is also why the European Union and its member States will consider whether or not to engage in this negotiation again during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

Despite the issues I mentioned, the European Union and its member States would like to reiterate their commitment to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and we look forward to further constructive dialogue and cooperation.

Mr. Xu Zhongsheng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. In that document world leaders jointly committed to promote the worthy cause of the sustainable development of humankind. The 2030 Agenda explicitly stipulates that all parties should uphold win-win cooperation so that the benefits of development will be shared by all countries of the world. Upholding win-win cooperation is a solemn pledge made by the entire United Nations membership in the 2030 Agenda, and it is an important building block and basic principle underlying achievement of the Agenda. It is a principle that should be safeguarded and adhered to. It should not

be jeopardized or undermined under any pretext. Some parties are benefiting from this important principle while simultaneously jeopardizing or undermining it.

China firmly supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the adoption of resolution 72/310 by consensus. We deeply regret that some countries requested a recorded vote. China has always supported NEPAD alongside African countries, and we follow the principle of sincerity, real results, amity and good faith, as well as the principle of pursuing the greater good and shared interests. China has long stood with African countries. Together, we have worked in harmony and forged ahead.

Recently China and African countries jointly convened the 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. Chinese and African leaders deliberated on the theme "China and Africa: towards an Even Stronger Community with a Shared Future through Win-win Cooperation". Through profound exchanges and consultations, they decided on eight initiatives for cooperation, covering such areas as industrial promotion, infrastructure connectivity, trade facilitation, green development, capacity-building, health care, people-to-people exchanges, and peace and development. The leaders agreed to achieve strategic and close alignment between the Belt and Road Initiative, the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and the national development strategies of African countries, so as to inject new vitality into our common development through win-win cooperation.

At the Beijing Summit, President Xi Jinping pointed out that China has all along respected, loved and supported Africa. We follow a five-node approach in our relations with African countries, namely, no interference in the pursuit by African countries of development paths that suit their national conditions; no interference in the internal affairs of African countries; no imposition of our will on African countries; no attachment of political strings to assistance to Africa; and no search for selfish political gains from investment and financing cooperation with Africa. We hope that this five-node approach will be applied by other countries as they deal with matters regarding Africa. China supports African countries in their efforts to achieve their independent and self-reliant development so that African people can have a happy and better life.

Ms. Eckels-Currie (United States of America): Throughout the negotiations on resolution 72/310, we made our concerns with the text well known. We repeatedly offered alternative formulations during the negotiations, and today we offered a constructive amendment in the spirit of compromise that would ensure that the resolution remained consistent with the principles of the United Nations. We are therefore disappointed that those and other efforts to address the presence of inappropriate language in this text were not successful. As a result, the United States felt compelled to call for a vote today and to vote against this year's resolution on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: implementation and international support", owing to the presence of the national policy rhetoric of a single Member State in the text.

The United States applauds the efforts of the African Union (AU) to realize the goals and aspirations of NEPAD. We strongly support NEPAD's overall mission to address the critical challenges of poverty, development and marginalization facing Africa internationally. The United States is a staunch supporter of AU efforts towards our shared goal of a stable and prosperous Africa. As a clear example of our commitment, we are proud to have been one of the non-African countries to establish a separate diplomatic mission to the AU, a reflection of the robust and deep historical relationship between Africa and the United States.

Since 2007, the United States has contributed over $1 billion in voluntary and in-kind support to the African Union Mission in Somalia. Since its inception, in 2004, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief has provided over $67 billion for Africa, including life-saving treatments to more than 13.3 million men, women and children, and has enabled more than 2.2 million babies to be born HIV-free on the continent. With the AU, we hope to establish the Africa centre for disease control. These are just a few examples of how the United States and the AU continue to collaborate to meet the challenges facing Africa.

The United States continues to seek new areas of cooperation and collaboration with our African partners. However, we cannot support draft resolutions on this topic as long as they include references to win-win cooperation, such as appeared in paragraph 28 of today's resolution. One State Member of the United Nations has been promoting such language and other similar phrases in an effort to promote the domestic

policy agenda of its Head of State through United Nations policies, programmes and documents. None of us should support the incorporation of language targeting a domestic political audience into multilateral documents, and we should not support language that undermines the fundamental principles of sustainable development. Short cuts to economic prosperity and social development that set aside the rule of law, human rights, good governance and the participation of civil society, or that would mortgage countries' economic futures and national patrimonies, can only undermine truly sustainable development, especially for the most vulnerable among us.

The United States commitment to international development is enshrined in the President's National Security Strategy. We remain the largest provider of official development assistance and continue to support countries most in need, while promoting a path to self-reliance and resilience. We are committed to continuing our support for the efforts of the AU and NEPAD to address critical challenges on the ground, where it matters most.

At the same time, I must also reiterate our well-known concerns with certain aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, in particular their climate-change language and technology-transfer language. In that connection, I refer the Assembly to our explanation of vote delivered at the adoption of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Ministerial Declaration in July. In addition, we would have been unable to join a consensus on the attempt in paragraph 33 to prescribe the appropriate characteristics of international systems that are independent of the United Nations. We reject any texts that suggest that the Organization should give direction to other independent multilateral institutions with respect to member countries' trade policies, including the reference to improved market access in paragraph 44.

We are disappointed that we had to call for a vote today on the resolution just adopted, and to cast a vote against it. In no way should that vote be construed as a lessening of our support for our shared goals and our partnership with Africa, and we strongly urge our African friends and partners to work with us going forward to avoid such outcomes in the future.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 66?

It was so decided.

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/72/L.59/Rev.1)

Draft amendments (A/72/L.70 and A/72/L.72)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1.

Ms. Elgarf (Egypt): I have the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the Group of 77 (G-77) and China, introducing draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1, on the implementation of the recommendation contained in the report (A/72/223) of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict in Africa and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

We believe that the draft resolution continues to serve as an important platform for strengthening Africa's responsibility and role in securing peace and security on the continent, and entails the need for Africa to strengthen its capacity to address the root causes of conflict and to resolve conflict in a peaceful manner.

The G-77 and China acknowledges positive trends and advances in achieving durable peace in Africa. The draft resolution also emphasizes the need to create the conditions required for durable peace as a prerequisite for sustainable development. In that regard, there is an urgent need to continue developing Africa's human and institutional capacities, particularly in countries emerging from conflict. The Group recalls that African countries have taken numerous steps to address peace and security challenges at the national and regional levels, including in dealing with terrorism and instability, by establishing the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the Multinational Joint Task Force, and by deploying the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Those commendable efforts serve, despite their limited capacity and resources, to manifest Africa's determination to find solutions to its own security

challenges. Furthermore, African countries have demonstrated growing commitment to the rule of law and good governance. The African Peer Review Mechanism has become a unique and innovative framework for promoting good governance, as well as durable peace and sustainable development, across the continent.

In that regard, all efforts should focus on ensuring the necessary means for implementation, including financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building. The scale must be ambitious enough to meet the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals. Developed countries should fulfil their commitments to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including with regard to official development assistance, as aid remains an important source for development financing for developing countries, particularly in Africa.

The G-77 and China is of the view that, in order to complement and strengthen Africa's efforts to address challenges to the continent's peace and security, it is critical that partners enhance their support for African peace and security activities, and help build the continent's own capacity to prevent and resolve conflict through increased assistance. No country or organization can solve such challenges alone. Moreover, the G-77 and China underscores the importance of the long-standing and exemplary partnership between the United Nations and Africa, notably through the support for the establishment and operationalization of the African Union Peace and Security Architecture, which comprises cooperation between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council.

This year's draft resolution brings in new elements to advance Africa's efforts in that regard. It underlines the importance of a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace and to preventing conflict by addressing its root causes. Promoting sustained economic growth, eradicating poverty and promoting reconciliation and unity at the national level are crucial to addressing the expansion of conflict in the African continent.

The draft resolution underlines the need to address the economic, social and environmental impact of climate change, desertification and land degradation in Africa. Initiatives enhancing agricultural resilience in Africa, particularly the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and other initiatives, such as the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel and the Land Policy Initiative, are not only important but critical to the agricultural security of the African continent and, by extension, to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Group calls upon the international community to enhance support and fulfil its commitments to take further actions in areas to the economic and social development of the African continent. That can be achieved only if a mutually beneficial approach is employed to create a shared future based on the common humanity of all States Members of the United Nations. The Group is therefore gravely concerned that the draft resolution, which is aimed at drastically reducing conflict situations and promoting durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, is being subjected to a vote in the General Assembly.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the representative of Nigeria for his commendable efforts as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China. I would also like to thank the representative of Morocco for his role in facilitating the consultations on the draft resolution and his outstanding outreach enabling us to present a text that is well-balanced to be considered for adoption. We express our appreciation to all members for their effort and constructive engagement in the negotiation process. The Group of 77 and China would also like to express its appreciation to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for its support during the negotiations on this draft resolution. We look forward to working with all partners in mutual trust and in good faith to implement the key deliverables in this draft resolution.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Austria to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.70.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States to introduce the draft amendment to draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1 contained in document A/72/L.70.

The EU and its member States would like to call for the deletion of the word "agriculture" before the word "resilience" in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution. Throughout the negotiations, the EU and its member States have voiced their concern that the draft resolution should address all root causes of conflicts, including climate-related threats. The interplay between climate and security is not an abstract theoretical risk, and

failing to build resilience to climate change will threaten lives, livelihoods and economies across the world.

Paragraph 10, as it has been presented in the draft resolution, focuses too narrowly on agriculture resilience and excludes other climate change-related challenges, such as food insecurity or water insecurity. Despite its relevance, it is also insufficient, and the consequences of climate change will have a negative impact on our progress towards achieving the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We must continue our efforts to build resilience to climate change. By presenting this amendment to strike out "agriculture", we therefore call on the General Assembly to take into account in this paragraph all risks, including climate-related security risks. I thank the Assembly for its attention and its support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America to introduce the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.72.

Ms. Eckels-Currie (United States of America): The United States cannot support the references to the "spirit of win-win cooperation" and the creation of "a shared future, based upon our common humanity", which currently appear in paragraph 17. Those phrases represent an unprecedented and inappropriate effort by a single Member State to insert the political rhetoric and domestic political agenda of its Head of State into United Nations policy documents. We have therefore proposed the following change.

In paragraph 17, the words "in the spirit of win-win cooperation and to create a shared future, based upon on our common humanity" should be deleted. This draft amendment would in no way weaken or undermine the text; rather, it would remove this awkward and unnecessary rhetoric that serves only to privilege the domestic political agenda of a certain Head of State over the accepted principles of the United Nations and the stated purpose of the draft resolution. We therefore urge all Member States to support the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.72.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1 and draft amendments A/72/L.70 and A/72/L.72.

Before giving the floor for explanations of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Eckels-Currie (United States of America): It is unfortunate that we must take the floor again to call for a vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/72/L.59/Rev.1. The United States supports the majority of the ideas underlying the draft resolution regarding the causes of conflict in Africa. We join with others here today in welcoming the progress made by African countries, the African Union and subregional organizations in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development, and urge continuing close collaboration among those actors and the United Nations system in pursuit of those goals.

The United States echoes the concerns expressed in the draft resolution about the threat of terrorism and violent extremism in Africa and supports the call to enhance the role of women in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We also commend the African-led initiatives to strengthen political and economic governance and strive towards creating enabling environments for inclusive economic growth. However, as noted in our draft amendment (A/72/L.72), the United States objects to language in paragraph 17 that incorporates certain political catchphrases associated with a particular Member State into a draft resolution on the causes of conflict in Africa. This ideologically driven language is contrary to the very object and purpose of the draft resolution and, if fully embraced, is likely to increase conflict, rather than ameliorate it. The type of development and political cooperation represented by the so-called win-win model is in sharp contrast to well-established development best practices, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected States.

The United States has consistently supported many important goals of the African Union Agenda 2063, most recently at the United States-African Union High-level Dialogue held in November 2017 in Washington, D.C., and notes that the Agenda includes such goals as improving access to, and the quality of, education, investing in infrastructure, protecting the environment, strengthening democracy and the rule of law, and many other worthy initiatives shared by African countries and the United States. There should be no question about our unparalleled commitment to peace and prosperity in Africa.

Given our intense and long-time partnerships in Africa, we were therefore frustrated that negotiations

on areas of concern were unable to get the draft text into a place we could support it. In particular, in addition to our previously noted concerns, we are concerned by language committing to reducing food imports that could have a negative impact on food security, and we hope to hold further discussions with the African Union on this issue. We also have well-known concerns with certain elements of the language on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement, climate change, market access and technology transfer, as stated in our explanation of vote delivered at the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Throughout negotiations, we have made our issues with this draft text well known. We have offered constructive amendments in the spirit of compromise, but we simply cannot join consensus on a draft resolution that validates the efforts of a single Member State to incorporate its unrelated, and frankly inappropriate, domestic political agenda into this draft resolution on the causes of conflict in Africa. The United States will therefore call for a vote on the draft resolution and will vote no on the draft text if it remains unchanged. We cannot join consensus on the endorsement of a pernicious effort to promote the domestic political agenda of a single Member State at the expense of the basic framework of international human rights, and we will continue to use our voice and stand up for the principles of sovereignty, human rights and truly sustainable development.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/72/L.59/Rev.1, Turkey has also become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The President: In accordance with rule 90 of the rules of procedure, before we proceed to take action on draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1, the Assembly shall first take decisions on the draft amendments issued as documents A/72/L.70 and A/72/L.72, one by one.

We will first take action on the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.70.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft amendment A/72/L.70?

The draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.70 was adopted.

The President: We will next take action on the draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.72.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia

(Federated States of), Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Abstaining:

Equatorial Guinea, Norway, Tuvalu

The draft amendment contained in document A/72/L.72 was rejected by 47 votes to 107, with 3 abstentions.

The President: We will now take action on draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

Draft resolution A/72/L.59/Rev.1, as amended, was adopted by 158 votes to 1 (resolution 72/311).

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote after the voting on resolution 72/311, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, let me express the group's gratitude to Morocco, in its capacity as the facilitator of the process of negotiations on resolution 72/311, on the causes of conflicts and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, and Egypt, in its capacity as President of the Group of 77, as well as colleagues representing groups and Member States that participated informal consultations.

The EU and its member States engaged constructively throughout the negotiation of this text in order for the resolution to accurately reflect all root

causes of conflict, including climate-related threats. The interplay between climate and security is not an abstract theoretical risk. Failing to build resilience to climate change will threaten lives, livelihoods and economies across the world. There is a moral imperative to help those who will lose most from the consequences of climate change. The EU and its member States have been clear about their support for the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the importance of climate action for security and prosperity. Without such efforts, the effects of extreme and shifting weather patterns will undermine livelihoods, make investments riskier and disrupt global trade. Progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will be severely compromised. That challenge needs concerted action. All development must work to build resilience to climate change.

We are therefore pleased that our amendment to paragraph 10 of resolution 72/311 was accepted in order to accurately reflect climate-related challenges in Africa, including food and water insecurity. Those are root causes of conflict and must be recognized by this organ as such. The General Assembly should take into account all risks, including climate-related security risks, particularly if we are to build resilience. We commend the Secretary-General on his efforts to address climate change and are committed to supporting him. That includes the convening of his climate summit in September 2019, where there will be a particular focus on building resilience.

The EU is disappointed that the resolution contains outdated language in the twenty-first preambular paragraph that fails to reflect the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in conflict prevention. That was underlined by the sustaining peace resolutions in 2016, namely, General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016); is reflected in the mandate of the PBC; and was affirmed at the high-level meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace in April (see A/72/PV.83 et seq.). It is clear that the Peacebuilding Commission, in its considerations of country-specific and regional situations, is a body that contributes to sustaining peace. It is important that it does so, considering that it is the only body of the United Nations that brings together the affected countries themselves and States Members of the United Nations, inter alia Security Council members, major donors, as well as international financial institutions and others, in that way. The paragraph as it stands does not contain agreed current language and does not accurately reflect the mandate of the PBC, which is inexplicable and regrettable.

The European Union and its member States also take issue with the mention of win-win cooperation in the resolution. We do not believe that slogan will move us closer to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or the African Union's Agenda 2063. The concept of win-win cooperation has changed substantially from the time it was inserted in the 2030 Agenda to become a development cooperation tool that calls for mutual economic gains to take precedence over the sustainable development needs of the receiving countries. We reject that notion and the concept behind it.

Finally, allow me to make a general point. Despite the reservations we have on the text of the resolution, the European Union and its member States remain fully committed to engaging in constructive discussions with a view to advancing the implementation of peace and security priorities contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

Mr. Varga (Hungary): Hungary remains committed to promoting durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. In that regard, we believe that mitigating challenges caused by climate change, supporting development and placing emphasis on conflict prevention are highly indispensable in areas suffering from recurring conflicts in Africa and elsewhere. We support the comprehensive approach to the causes of conflict that realizes the linkages between development, climate change, the rule of law, and peace and security. Accordingly, Hungary voted in favour of the resolution 72/311.

Hungary aligns itself with the explanation of vote of the European Union and its member States, which was delivered by the representative of Austria, with regard to the resolution as a whole. With regard to paragraph 9, we would like to put on record the following statement in our national capacity.

Events in recent years prove that migration and its consequences pose serious security challenges and cause major difficulties for countries of origin, transit and destination. International efforts should be aimed at halting migration flows by prioritizing security considerations and reducing risks that induce that phenomenon. Every human being has the right to live

in peace and safety in his or her homeland. However, in our view, migration cannot be considered a basic human right. The Hungarian Government does not support any endeavour that could encourage migration. Therefore, given the decision of the Hungarian Government of 18 July to withdraw from the global compact for migration, Hungary interprets paragraph 9 in line with its national position laid down in the 12 points regarding migration.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 66 and agenda item 66 as a whole?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.114

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

114th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 12 September 2018, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 112

Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/72/300)

The President: As members are aware, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of matters with which the Council has ceased to deal. In that connection, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General issued as document A/72/300.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of that document?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 29

Report of the Security Council

Report of the Security Council (A/72/2)

The President: I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Ambassador Jonathan Cohen, to introduce the report of the Security Council.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, on behalf of all the members of the Security Council, for your service as President of the General Assembly, and for arranging today's meeting.

The United States, as the President of the Security Council for the month of September, has the honour to introduce the annual report of the Council (A/72/2), which covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017. The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. With the support of the United Nations membership, the Security Council has endeavoured to discharge its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter to support peacekeeping efforts and urge for the peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

Keeping up with recent trends, the activity of the Security Council increased in 2017. During the year, the Council held 296 formal meetings, of which 282 were public. The Council adopted 61 resolutions and 27 presidential statements, and issued 93 statements to the press. The Council also conducted five missions. In

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March 2017, the Council sent a mission to the countries of the Lake Chad basin region — Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria. In May, the Council went on a mission to Colombia. In June, it visited Haiti, and in September it met with the African Union in Addis Ababa. Lastly, in October 2017, the Council visited the Sahel region, including Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania.

Last year, the Council continued to prioritize thematic, general and cross-cutting issues, including non-proliferation, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, children and armed conflict, women and peace and security, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, sanctions, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, peace and security in Africa and the rule of law.

I would like to thank China for preparing the report and the members of the Council for their contributions to it.

Finally, on behalf of the Security Council, I would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat and all others involved in compiling and producing the report. We look forward to this afternoon's discussion of it and to hearing any views or comments from the members of the General Assembly, which we will be happy to take back to our colleagues in the Security Council.

Mr. Khoo (Singapore): We thank the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat for producing the annual report of the Security Council, as contained in document A/72/2.

Last year, my delegation noted that the annual debate on the report of the Security Council had become a ritual (see A/71/PV.95). We spoke of the need to take this agenda item more seriously, and to have the report finalized and circulated earlier, so that Member States could prepare for a more substantive and constructive exchange. Otherwise, this meeting is but one more formality in a long list of formalities. My delegation is therefore surprised and disappointed that this minimum request for more time was once again not met. Today's debate was scheduled very late, and the 243-page report was distributed late as well.

That is not merely a matter of scheduling. The General Assembly has spent much of the past year discussing the importance of multilateralism. Multilateralism is not only about the interactions between Member States. It is about the framework and norms that govern those interactions, particularly those that exist at the United Nations. Member States have engaged in important discussions in various forums about the proper role of the United Nations and its related organs. We have collectively spoken at length about the relationship of the Security Council to the wider membership. In fact, each year, the General Assembly approves between $7 billion and $8 billion to fund the Council's mandates. It is therefore pertinent to ask how the Security Council is accountable to the General Assembly, which is the only universally representative body that hears the voices of countries large or small. How do we assess the performance of the Security Council? That is the basis of this agenda item and why we should take this debate seriously.

Let me now turn to the report itself. My delegation notes that the report provides an overview of the activities of the Security Council for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017. We welcome the move to align the report to the calendar year, which provides a more logical basis for assessing the Council's work. We are also pleased by the effort this year to include more analysis and improve the narrative. In previous years the reports merely listed the number or type of meetings. This year's report tries to give a sense of the situation on the ground, the context of the Council's work during the reporting period and the outlook for the ensuing period. It is a step in the right direction, and we hope that it will continue in next year's report.

Looking ahead, my delegation would like to make two suggestions for improving the report so that it can help Member States and the wider international community to understand and assess the work of the Security Council and its effectiveness in addressing threats to international peace and security.

First, we note that each Council member is expected to complete and circulate a report on the work undertaken during its presidency. The report before us states that those monthly reports can be found online. We think it would be useful to include them in the annexes to the report of the Security Council to the Assembly. Submitting those monthly reports would be a first step towards that goal, since we note that only four have been submitted for the year 2017. That is disappointing. Reports are missing for eight Council members, including two permanent members. We find it surprising that some countries that have the privilege of serving on the Security Council, including

some that have since left the Council, have not yet published assessments of their presidencies. If those reports are not submitted, how can the Assembly assess their performance?

Secondly, we think that the Secretariat could make greater use of technology in order to make the report more useful and user-friendly. We would like to recognize the work of the Secretariat in collating statistical information and lists of documents for the report. It is particularly useful that all the relevant documents are hyperlinked in the PDF version of the document. That is a good research tool for Member States, for example, when we look into the relevant resolutions or Council products on specific topics.

My delegation thinks that more can be done to make the report more visible on the Council's website. In particular, the Secretariat should look into coordination between the report and the good work undertaken in the *Repertoire*. By itself, the *Repertoire* offers a historical perspective on the Council's work. In recent years, the *Repertoire* has converted this into useful online tools for Member States. Some deserving of mention include the field missions mandate table; research tables on cross-cutting issues, such as women and peace and security, children in armed conflict and the protection of civilians; and highlights of Security Council practice, including maps of the United Nations global presence in the field and data on sanctions regimes. Member States can therefore assess the Security Council's performance using qualitative and quantitative indicators. We can track how mandates have evolved for specific missions. The Security Council's annual report should find ways to collaborate with the *Repertoire*, and leverage its existing online presence to make information more accessible and digestible.

The annual report of the Security Council and today's plenary meeting are important avenues for Member States to provide inputs and views on the work of the Security Council. We have made our suggestions with the aim of helping to improve the transparency and accessibility of the Council's work. They would also help Member States assess the performance of the Security Council against objective, data-driven benchmarks. That in turn, we hope, will help to promote greater accountability for the Security Council, not only to the wider membership but also to the international community.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting to consider the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/72/2).

Taking into account the important mandate that the Charter of the United Nations entrusts to it, the Security Council's performance, first and foremost, must be rule-based and transparent. Moreover, in carrying out its functions, it should remain accountable to the General Assembly, which encompasses all States Members of the United Nations and on whose behalf the Council acts. That is the raison d'être of Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter, which obliges the Council to submit annual reports to the Assembly. In carrying out its duties, the Council should be bound to the Charter and act in accordance with the Organization's purposes and principles. Despite that, the Council continues to consider issues that do not fall under its purview and are therefore inconsistent with the Charter. We have seen examples of that in recent weeks, when issues have been put on the Council's agenda in an effort to pursue the national interests of certain members, and thereby abuse that important body. In many instances, unfortunately, the issues were related to States' internal affairs, interference in which is explicitly prohibited by the Charter. They must therefore cease.

The Council has also continued to examine issues whose consideration the Charter assigns to other United Nations organs. That is an encroachment on their functions and powers. As in previous years, in meetings of the General Assembly and the Council this year, many States called on the Council to studiously avoid the consideration of issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security. That long-standing demand needs to be heard by the Council.

Another observation that has been made about the Council's performance is that it has been increasingly, excessively and hastily resorting to its functions under Chapter VII as if there were no other provision in the Charter. As a result, in some cases the sovereign rights of States, as well as human rights, have been seriously violated. Chapter VII must be invoked as intended. It is a measure of last resort, and only if necessary.

Furthermore, while the holders of permanent seats on the Council have a special responsibility to promote its credibility, uphold the Charter and implement the Council's resolutions, it is a source of deep concern that this year one of them openly violated a Council

resolution, resolution 2231 (2015). Additionally, for the first time in the Council's history, that permanent member openly invited all Member States to either disobey that resolution or face punishment. If unchecked, that alarming trend will further tarnish the credibility of the Organization and the Council, eroding the rule of law and leading to international disorder.

In conclusion, the Security Council is an important United Nations organ and its performance and credibility are of concern to all Member States. The promotion of transparency and the rule of law in its work is therefore a common responsibility. To avoid further erosion of the Council's credibility, we should take that responsibility seriously and responsibly.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/72/2?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 29.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.115

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

Official Records

115th plenary meeting
Thursday, 13 September 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 140 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/72/713/Add. 6)

The President: Before proceeding to the item on our agenda, in keeping with established practice I would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/72/713/Add. 6, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/72/713/Add.5, Libya has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter of the United Nations.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/72/713/Add. 6?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 65 (*continued*)

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

The President: Members will recall that, in resolution 72/243 of 22 December 2017, the Assembly decided that the opening plenary meeting of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to be known as the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit will feature statements by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, the Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and an eminent person and a representative of civil society, both of whom were to be identified by the President of the Assembly.

In that connection, and as announced in my letter circulated on 11 September, I propose that the opening plenary meeting also feature statements by the President of the Republic of South Africa and the Prime Minister of Ireland.

In order for the Assembly to take up this proposal, it must first agree, under rule 81 of its rules of procedure, to reconsider the provision contained in paragraph 3 of resolution 72/243.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to reconsider the provision contained in paragraph 3 of resolution 72/243?

It was so decided.

The President: May I also take it that the General Assembly wishes to decide that the opening plenary meeting of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to be known as the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit will also feature statements by the President of the Republic of South Africa and the Prime Minister of Ireland?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 65.

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Agenda item 131

Sexual exploitation and abuse: implementing a zero-tolerance policy

Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1)

Draft resolution (A/72/L.69)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.69.

Mr. Edrees (Egypt): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the following countries: Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria and Pakistan, as well as my own country, Egypt.

At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important and timely meeting, and the Secretary-General for his report (A/72/751) under this agenda item. Last year, Egypt, together with Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria and Pakistan, initiated resolution 71/278, on United Nations action on sexual exploitation and abuse, out of our commitment to combating and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and our willingness to mobilize international consensus in support of that noble cause under the auspices of the General Assembly. Resolution 71/278 was the first milestone on a path towards a system-wide approach to implementing our zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. The resolution commended peacekeepers and the sacrifices that they make in order to maintain international peace and security. It reaffirmed the commitment to a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse throughout the United Nations system, including the civilian component of peacekeeping missions.

The main sponsors of this year's draft resolution on the same topic, contained in document A/72/L.69, agreed that it represents a genuine opportunity for the international community to renew its commitment to uniting to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and abuse. With this draft resolution, we will also have the chance to delve into deeper discussions on the subject during the seventy-third session.

Finally, we would like to thank the general membership for supporting this draft resolution, and we look forward to its adoption by consensus.

I would now like to make a statement in my national capacity.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

Egypt is committed to supporting the Secretary-General's efforts to implement the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations by establishing an item related to sexual exploitation and abuse on the agenda of the General Assembly, in accordance with resolution 71/278, entitled "United Nations action on sexual exploitation and abuse", which will provide an opportunity for Member States, particularly those that contribute troops to peacekeeping operations, to discuss all views on the policy's implementation.

Egypt's interest in combating such crimes has been reflected in our President's joining the Circle of Leadership and his participation in the high-level meeting convened on the margins of the General Assembly on the topic on 18 September 2017. Egypt believes that the initiative to join the voluntary compact to fight crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse and give momentum to the collective efforts of Member States and the Secretariat to fight such crimes is a positive one. I am therefore honoured to announce from this rostrum my Government's decision to endorse the joint communiqué of the Circle of Leadership on fighting sexual exploitation and abuse, and the joint declaration on peacekeeping operations adopted in the light of the Secretary-General's initiative in this respect. The President of Egypt will also take part in the high-level meeting to be held on the margins of the opening of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly on 25 September. Those national directives are fully consistent with Egypt's role in maintaining peace and security in the past few decades. Egypt is one of the biggest contributors of troops and police to peacekeeping operations all over the world, in particular in Africa.

Egypt takes note of the Secretary-General's recommendations in his report entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse" (A/72/751), particularly those related to working together with Member States to end the scourge of impunity, holding those implicated in such crimes accountable, encouraging countries to deploy national investigators in peacekeeping operations when needed, and conducting the necessary investigations in accordance with international norms while taking appropriate measures pursuant to national laws. We stress that troop-contributing countries should be given the support they need to uphold those standards.

We emphasize that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse should be provided with every form of support, including through the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the appointment of the first Victims' Rights Advocate, for legal, psychological and medical support.

The sacrifices made by the tens of thousands of United Nations peacekeepers who are working to protect civilians in extremely difficult conditions require that we refrain from stigmatizing troop-contributing States based on isolated cases and from imposing collective punishments on participating units. It is therefore important to raise awareness and to conduct training courses before and during the deployment of troops, as well as to enable and build the capacities of Member States so as to ensure that national investigation teams are dispatched speedily to places where claims of abuse have been made, and to decisively apply the law to whomever is shown to have committed such crimes.

In conclusion, Egypt trains and qualifies its peacekeeping troops to fight sexual exploitation and abuse in accordance with United Nations standards. Cairo's International Centre for Training on Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding provides specialized training courses for deployed troops in order to raise their awareness and enhance the prevention of such violations.

Egypt has been recognized for its efforts to implement the zero-tolerance policy as part of the description of Member States' best practices related to addressing and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse included in the Secretary-General's report for last year (A/71/818). These practices include launching investigations rapidly, and expeditiously establishing responsibility and imposing punishment when crimes are proven.

Lastly, Egypt expresses its readiness to cooperate with the Secretariat and share its experience with other troop-contributing countries to help them build their capacity to combat crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse and eliminate them as quickly as possible, with a view to making international peacekeeping operations more effective and credible.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.69, entitled "United Nations action on sexual exploitation and abuse".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/72/L.69, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors: Belarus, Burundi, Guatemala, Indonesia, Lebanon, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The President: May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/72/L.69?

Draft resolution A/72/L.69 was adopted (resolution 72/312).

The President: Before giving the floor for explanations of position after adoption, I would like to remind speakers that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Strainic (United States of America): The United States welcomes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to effectively addressing the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse, and its collective support for the United Nations zero-tolerance policy and the Secretary-General's related efforts to strengthen its implementation.

Sexual exploitation and abuse inflict significant harm on vulnerable communities, the very communities that look to the United Nations for protection and assistance in some of the world's most dangerous places. They also undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of United Nations field operations, agencies, funds and programmes, particularly when those responsible are not held accountable for their deplorable actions. The United States welcomes the possibility of future engagement with Member States on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse.

The United States strongly supports the authority of the Secretary-General to take necessary measures to implement the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. Today we reaffirm that we must all continue to do our utmost to address this scourge wherever it may exist within the United Nations system, and to promote accountability for the perpetrators of such unacceptable acts.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 131?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.116

General Assembly

Official Records

Seventy-second session

116th plenary meeting
Monday, 17 September 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 121 (*continued*)

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/72/896)

Draft resolution (A/72/896, paragraph 89)

The President: We shall now proceed to consider the draft resolution contained in paragraph 89 of document A/72/896.

In that connection, since the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group was circulated only this morning, it will be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear an objection, I will take it that the Assembly agrees with my proposal to waive rule 78.

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution contained in paragraph 89 of document A/72/896 was adopted (resolution 72/313).

The President: We will now hear statements after the adoption of the resolution.

I give the floor to the representative of Algeria, who will speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM), one of the largest cross-regional groups, consisting of 120 Member States.

The Non-Aligned Movement would like to express its appreciation to the President, His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, for his interest in and commitment to strengthening the work of the General Assembly and for putting a particular concern for the transparency, efficiency and accountability of the work of the Office of the President of the General Assembly among the priorities of his mandate to lead the Assembly at its seventy-second session. The Movement thanks the Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly and all Member States for their collective efforts, which today made it possible for the General Assembly to adopt by consensus resolution 72/313, on the revitalization of the work of the Assembly.

The Non-Aligned Movement underlines the importance of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, which is a political process rather than a procedural matter and is aimed mainly at

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strengthening the role of the Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the Organization in the wider United Nations system. The revitalization should therefore be conducted in an inclusive, democratic, transparent and efficient manner. The Non-Aligned Movement strongly believes that sustained efforts have been made to make the work of the General Assembly more focused and relevant. That has been identified as a priority since the fifty-eighth session, and the collective efforts of all Member States during subsequent sessions have contributed to streamlining the agenda, improving the practices and working methods of the Main Committees, enhancing the role of the General Committee, strengthening the role and authority of the President and enhancing the Assembly's role in the process of selecting the Secretary-General.

In that context, during its sixty-ninth, seventieth and seventy-first sessions, the Assembly adopted three landmark resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly — resolutions 69/321, 70/305 and 71/323 — which among other things have enhanced the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General, in particular through the joint letter of the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council launching the process and through the organization of informal dialogues to be held with candidates for the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations. The revitalization process also established an oath of office and a code of ethics for the President of the General Assembly and provided for informal interactive dialogues with candidates for that position. The practice of convening high-level thematic interactive debates is also a direct outcome of the revitalization process.

NAM continues to believe strongly that more efforts should be deployed, with the support and the political willingness of all Member States, aimed at making even greater progress, which is urgently needed to overcome the divergences that persist with respect to the various issues relating to the four interconnected clusters. However, NAM would also like to flag the fact that clarifications are still missing, particularly concerning the method applied by the Chairs and the Secretariat to establish the pattern of rotation. We regret the fact that despite the efforts that have been made, the issue has not been completely resolved. In that regard, a thorough evaluation of the status of implementation of the resolutions of the General Assembly and clear identification of the underlying causes behind any lack of implementation are crucial if we are to progressively eliminate the constraints that continue to prevent the process of revitalizing the Assembly from living up to its potential.

The Non-Aligned Movement maintains that the principles of transparency, accountability and good-faith cooperation should continue to form the basis of the work in the United Nations. We fully adhere to the letter and spirit of resolutions 69/321, 70/305 and 71/323, which are now the cornerstones for the evolution of United Nations reform, and we look forward to seeing the spirit of those resolutions strictly respected. The Non-Aligned Movement commends the support extended by the Secretariat to intergovernmental processes and believes that the continued improvement of that interaction could greatly enhance the efficiency of those processes, thereby directly contributing to the revitalization of the General Assembly.

In conclusion, NAM stresses once again that strengthening the work of the General Assembly will ensure that this "chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations" will become a true, universal "parliament of nations". To that end, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly plays a key role in the context of the global reform of the United Nations. Nevertheless, we continue to insist that partners need to show greater flexibility, and we request that more NAM proposals be taken into account from draft zero on. I wish to humbly recall that I speak on behalf of 120 Member States.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Madagascar, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Ms. Razafitrimo (Madagascar): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of African States, which associates itself with the statement just made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

On behalf of the African Group, Mr. President, I would first like to express my sincere thanks to you and the Chairs for having successfully led the lengthy negotiations on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, which has enabled us to adopt resolution 72/313 by consensus today. I also want to express my thanks to the Secretariat for the support it has given us during this intergovernmental process. As

part of NAM, we consider that as usual, the Secretariat has shown a great deal of flexibility. We believe in the principle that the four clusters, which constitute the basis of the revitalization process, are interlinked.

The African Group reiterates the importance of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. For us, it a political process rather than a procedural matter, aiming mainly at strengthening the role of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the Organization in the wider United Nations system. In that regard, the revitalization process should therefore be conducted in an inclusive, democratic, transparent and efficient manner.

The African Group strongly believes that resolutions 69/321, 70/305 and 71/323, adopted by the General Assembly, are the cornerstone resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly. Among other things, they have provided for informal dialogues to be held with candidates for the position of Secretary-General. They have also established an oath of office and a code of ethics for the President of the General Assembly and have provided for informal interactive dialogues with candidates for that position. The practice of convening high-level thematic interactive debates is also a direct outcome of the revitalization process.

However, there are constraints that still prevent the process of revitalization of the General Assembly from fulfilling its potential. In that regard, a thorough evaluation of the status of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions and the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, and a clear identification of the underlying causes behind any lack of implementation, are required if we are to progressively eliminate those constraints.

In conclusion, the African Group believes that we must flag the fact that there are still clarifications missing, particularly concerning the method applied in establishing the pattern of rotation. We regret the fact that this situation remains unresolved despite all the efforts. Regardless of that, the African Group has decided to join the consensus and requests that its position on this issue be formally registered.

Finally, we insist that all Member States show more flexibility, and we stress the urgent need to foster a more empowered General Assembly without encroachments on its powers or functions.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Van Den Akker (European Union): I thank you, Mr. President, on behalf of the European Union and its member States, for your personal commitment to this important agenda item.

On behalf of the European Union and its member States, I would also like to warmly thank the co-Chairs and their respective teams for their efforts and wisdom and for having guided us through the negotiations, which resulted in the adoption of resolution 72/313 today.

The European Union and its member States joined the consensus on the resolution, since we believe that it has significantly gained in importance over the past few years. We are disappointed that last year's language on civil-society participation in General Assembly meetings could not be retained. We believe that it is crucial for the United Nations to be as open, transparent and accountable as possible and that the participation of civil society is important for our credibility as an organization.

In addition, we regret the fact that no agreement could be reached on the language regarding the allocation of dedicated Secretariat staff to the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

However, on both issues, the European Union and its member States will be guided by the language agreed in last year's resolution 71/323. Allow me also to warmly thank the Secretariat for its support throughout the process.

The President: We have heard the last speaker on this item.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassadors Vladimir Drobnjak of Croatia and Maria Emma Mejía Vélez of Colombia, co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly, for having so ably conducted discussions and led the complex negotiations of the Working Group. I am sure that members of the Assembly will join me in extending our sincere appreciation to them.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 121?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 31

Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. In its resolution 58/316, the General Assembly decided that the item should be considered every three years. It is my understanding that the item will therefore be included on the provisional agenda of the seventy-fifth session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 31?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 32

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. In its resolution 55/285, the General Assembly decided that the item should be considered biennially, starting from its fifty-sixth session. It is my understanding that the item will therefore be included in the provisional agenda of the seventy-fourth session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 32?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 34

Prevention of armed conflict

(a) Prevention of armed conflict

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this sub-item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to include it on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include sub-item (a) of agenda item 34 on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 34?

It was so decided.

(b) Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this sub-item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. In connection with this sub-item, I have received a letter dated 2 May 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Turkey to the United Nations, in their capacity as the co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Mediation, requesting the inclusion of this sub-item on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session of the Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of sub-item (b) and include it on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 34 and agenda item 34 as a whole?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 36

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. In connection with this item, I have received a request from the representative of Brazil that consideration of this item be deferred to the seventy-third session of the Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 36?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 40

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. In connection with this item, I have received a letter dated 6 August 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations requesting that consideration of this item be deferred to the seventy-third session of the Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer consideration of this item and to include it on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

Ms. Simonyan (Armenia): My delegation would like to put on record the fact that Armenia dissociates itself from the decision to include agenda item 40 on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 40?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 41

Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on its agenda, on the understanding that there would be no consideration of this item by the Assembly until further notice. In connection with this item, I have received a note verbale dated 17 May 2018 from the Permanent Mission of the Comoros to the United Nations requesting the inclusion of this item on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include this item on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 41?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 43

The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session, in accordance with decision 60/508 of 31 October 2005. In decision 60/508, the General Assembly decided that this item shall remain on the agenda for consideration upon notification by a Member State. Accordingly, this item has been included on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 43?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 44 to 49

Question of Cyprus

Armed aggression against the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti

Armed Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations and its grave consequences for the established international system concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and international peace and security

Consequences of the Iraqi occupation of and aggression against Kuwait

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include items 44 to 49 on the agenda of the seventy-second session, in accordance with paragraph 4 (b) of the annex to its resolution 58/316, of 1 July

2004. In resolution 58/316, the General Assembly decided that these items shall remain on the agenda for consideration upon notification by a Member State. Accordingly, these items have been included on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda items 44 to 49?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 88

Request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. In resolution 71/292, the General Assembly decided, in accordance with Article 96 of the Charter of the United Nations, to request the International Court of Justice, pursuant to Article 65 of the Statute of the Court, to render an advisory opinion.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include this item on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 88?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 120 (*continued*)

Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to include this item on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include this item on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 120?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 123 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the United Nations system

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to include this item on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include this item on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 123?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 124 (*continued*)

United Nations reform: measures and proposals

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this itemon the agenda of the seventy-second session. In its resolution 55/285, the General Assembly decided that this item would be considered biennially, starting from its fifty-sixth session. It is my understanding that the item will therefore be included on the provisional agenda of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 124?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 155

Financing of the United Nations Mission in East Timor

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2017, the Assembly decided to include this item on the agenda of the seventy-second session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to defer its consideration of agenda item 155 and to include it on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 155?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to remind delegations that the following agenda items, on which action has been taken at previous meetings, remain open for consideration during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly: items 9, 14, 15, 19, 22, 22 (b), 24, 24 (a), 24 (b), 29, 35, 37, 38, 55, 65, 72, 72 (c), 73, 73 (a) through (c), 99, 99 (cc), 107, 113, 114, 114 (a) and (b), 117, 127, 130, 133 to 137, 139 to 143, 145 to 154 and 156 to 165.

As members are aware, those items have been included on the draft agenda of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, with the exception of sub-item (b) of agenda item 114, entitled "Election of the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme"; agenda item 135, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017"; and agenda item 147, entitled "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include agenda items 9, 14, 15, 19, 22, 22 (b), 24, 24 (a) and (b), 29, 35, 37, 38, 55, 65, 72, 72 (c), 73, 73 (a) through (c), 99, 99 (cc), 107, 113, 114, 114 (a), 117, 127, 130, 133, 134, 136, 137, 139 to 143, 145, 146, 148 to 154 and 156 to 165 on the draft agenda of its seventy-third session?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda items 9, 14, 15, 19, 22, 22 (b), 24, 24 (a), 24 (b), 29, 35, 37, 38, 55, 65, 72, 72 (c), 73, 73 (a), 73 (b), 73 (c), 99, 99 (cc), 107, 113, 114, 114 (a) and (b), 117, 127, 130, 133 to 137, 139 to 143, 145 to 154 and 156 to 165?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President: I would like to draw members' attention to the letter of the President dated 16 September 2018 concerning the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis.

Members will recall that in its resolution 72/268 of 4 April 2018, the Assembly decided that the high-level meeting would be held on the second day of the general debate of the Assembly at its seventy-third session, from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., that its opening segment would be held from 10.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m., and that its plenary segment would be held from 11.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

In that connection, and as announced in the letter just mentioned, I propose, under agenda item 127, entitled "Global health and foreign policy", that the high-level meeting be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., that its opening segment be held from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and that its plenary segment be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

In order for the Assembly to take up this proposal, it must first agree, under rule 81 of its rules of procedure, to reconsider the provision contained in paragraphs 1 and 3 of resolution 72/268.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to reconsider the provision contained in paragraphs 1 and 3 of resolution 72/268?

It was so decided.

The President: May I also take it that the General Assembly wishes to decide that the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis shall be held on the second day of the general debate of the Assembly at its seventy-third session from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., that its opening segment shall be held from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and that its plenary segment shall be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.?

It was so decided.

The President: Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to consult members on inviting, as mentioned in my letter dated 14 September 2018, the following speakers to make statements during the commemorative plenary meeting, to be held on 21 September 2018, to pay tribute to the late former Secretary-General Kofi Annan: Mr. Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the United Nations; Mrs. Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and member of The Elders; Mrs. Nane Annan, spouse of Kofi Annan; Mr. Iqbal Riza, former Under-Secretary-General and Chef de Cabinet; Ms. Anastasiya Delenda, former staff member of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General; and a family member of the late former Secretary-General Kofi Annan to speak on behalf of his children.

If there is no objection, may I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly, without setting a precedent, to invite those speakers to make statements at the commemorative meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: I would also like to inform Member States that, as announced in the *Journal of the United Nations* today, the closing of the seventy-second session will be held this afternoon at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

United Nations A/72/PV.117

General Assembly

Seventy-second session

Official Records

117th plenary meeting
Monday, 17 September 2018, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Statement by the Secretary-General

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

The Secretary-General: I congratulate my very dear friend, His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, and all representatives on the successful completion of a very productive session. The general debate in September was the first in more than a decade at which all Member States spoke. That was a sign of welcome engagement by political leaders at the highest level and of faith in the value of this unique and universal organ. The seventy-second session has been busy and active in addressing issues ranging from climate change and intolerance to disarmament and economic and social development. The General Assembly has demonstrated yet again its invaluable role as a forum for addressing the full spectrum of the world's concerns and aspirations.

The seventy-second session has also been notable for the wide-ranging efforts undertaken by Member States to strengthen the United Nations itself. The General Assembly took the decision to shift the Organization's management paradigm and restructured the peace and security pillar. Most significantly, the Assembly adopted a far-reaching resolution aimed at repositioning the United Nations development system (resolution 72/279). That ushered in the most ambitious transformation in decades of the United Nations support of social and economic progress. These changes and reforms, once fully implemented, will make our Organization more effective and efficient in pursuing peace and in helping Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Through this work, the President of the General Assembly, Miroslav Lajčák, showed great skill in guiding this organ. He possesses deep knowledge across the international agenda and has always been strongly committed to cooperation as a critical ingredient in success, and so he took a wide range of steps to bring people together and new partners into the Assembly's work. He has always been a warm, accessible and friendly presence — a welcome complement to the difficult work that we do.

In another signature step of the seventy-second session, the Assembly has continued to move towards greater transparency by holding, for the first time ever, an informal dialogue with candidates for the position of the President. I look forward to working closely with President-elect Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés of Ecuador, who is the fourth woman to serve in this capacity. The Assembly is our indispensable forum. I thank all involved in the successes of the seventy-second session for their commitment and hard work, and for setting the stage for further gains as the seventy-third session begins tomorrow.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I will now deliver my closing statement.

This will be my final speech to the General Assembly and I want to use it to reflect on the year

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we have had; however, I will avoid listing achievements or events. My team has produced a hand-over report that contains this information and is available on our website. Instead, I will try to give my own political assessment of what I have seen and heard as President of the General Assembly, and in doing so I will highlight six major trends I have identified. My humble hope is that this contribution can inspire more dialogue about these issues in the future.

The first trend is about peace, and on this the Charter of the United Nations is very strong. It commits us to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. But we have not always met this commitment; in the past we were too reactive. While we had excellent peacekeepers and mediators, the problem was that by the time they got there it was often too late. Essentially, we were trying to keep peace when there was no peace left to keep, and we were leaving too soon, before the roots of conflict had been pulled fully from the ground. We have, however, recognized that, and in 2016 the General Assembly and Security Council adopted the groundbreaking resolutions 70/262 and 2282 (2016), respectively, which outlined a new approach called "sustaining peace" and turned our focus to preventive action.

Then, at this seventy-second session, we brought sustaining peace to the attention of world leaders. In April, we held a first-ever high-level meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, and we heard a powerful response from the heads of the delegations. They put their weight behind this new concept and brought best practices and new ideas to the table. The entire General Assembly was instrumental in bringing this about. I therefore think we can say that we have all brought greater visibility and prominence to this new approach to peace. But we have a lot of work ahead. Sustaining peace cannot be just a concept or an aspiration; rather, it should be seen more like an operations manual — something that guides the real work we do on the ground every day.

The second trend I want to highlight today is about our planet. I think most of us have realized something — it is crunch time. At the previous general debate, climate change was the most frequently referenced item on the agenda. In fact, 85 per cent of Heads of State and delegations spoke about it, and I predict that we will see similar trends next week. When it comes to the environment, a lot has happened over the past year. We have seen the Paris Agreement on Climate Change make headlines; we have seen hurricanes in the Caribbean; and we have seen flooding and drought hit communities around the world, from Africa to Asia. Indeed, the climate is changing; the planet is reacting to what we are doing and the need for action is very real. I have heard more and more members of the General Assembly reflect that in their speeches here at the United Nations.

Alongside that, our approach to sustainable development is evolving. We have gone from making broad calls for future action to outlining the tangible steps that we are or should be taking right now. To date, over 100 countries have volunteered to share their work in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Next summer, we will have the first major review of all of our efforts at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

While there is good news, there is also another side to the story. The fact is that we still live in an unequal world. The big agreements are usually reached in halls like this one by people like us, but the real need for them is out there. That need is driven by people living in poverty; the people feeling the real impact of climate change; the people looking to the future with only worry or fear. That is why people like us in here need to keep the promises we made to the people out there.

But we cannot do any of that without the funding. As it stands, we are on track to achieve neither the Sustainable Development Goals nor the goals of the Paris Agreement. We must do more to mobilize financing. We need new partnerships, in particular with the private sector, but they will come only through sustained outreach and dialogue. The window of opportunity will not stay open forever and we need to wake up before it closes.

Now I will turn to a third trend I have seen, which is the growing ability of the General Assembly to adapt to major global shifts. In 2015 and 2016, some newspapers and politicians, particularly in my part of the world, were talking about the migration crisis. To others, especially our brothers and sisters in Africa, migration had been a fact of life for a long time. But all of us agreed on one thing — we could not continue with business as usual. And so, we turned to the United Nations and its General Assembly.

We had many discussions about the challenges of irregular migration, as well as the opportunities that come when it is safe, orderly and regular, and we

decided to finally develop a global framework. This summer, we arrived at the final document. It took a lot of work and even more will come after it is adopted at the world's first Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, to be held in Morocco in December. I think that this shows that our international machinery, with the Assembly as its engine room, can adapt and react. It is a source of solutions for almost any issue on the global agenda. Also, with 193 members and observers, the General Assembly has enormous legitimacy, and given its flexible agenda, the Assembly can play the role of a global thought leader.

But the fact is we have never seen a rate of change like this one. It is growing faster than ever and the General Assembly cannot get left behind. As the world's most representative body, it must stay ahead of the curve, or at least be quick to follow it, and that is particularly important as issues like artificial intelligence, data protection and the future of work take up more space in our daily lives. But the Assembly cannot do this from inside a bubble. It will need to hear from the people on the ground — from scientists, academics and technicians to parliamentarians, journalists and young people. These are the people who are out there seeing changes happen in real time. They must be able to tell their stories and give their opinions in halls like this one, or else we will be left playing catch-up while other actors drive the discourse.

A fourth trend I want to speak about today is reform. The United Nations must evolve; the United Nations must adapt; the United Nations must be equipped for the world around it. These were the kinds of phrases that we heard at last year's general debate. During the seventy-second session, the Secretary-General released reform proposals in three areas: peace and security, management and development. The General Assembly has since then decided to advance all three, and this is a step forward. There is no doubt about it.

But I want to use my platform today to highlight a potential challenge. We can all say that we want to reform and we can even adopt resolutions to support each reform process. But these actions alone cannot produce results. We also need funding, and that, I think, is another trend. Overall, there is a growing appetite for reform and innovation. We have raised our expectations, but we do not always have the budget to go with them. So I believe this issue is in need of further discussion, but I cannot talk about the reform proposals without acknowledging the Secretary-General. It has been a pleasure to work with him this year. I know how much his leadership is needed and appreciated in these trying times, and I am confident that this house will back his efforts to secure the central role of our United Nations in a changing world.

Now, I want to talk about reform within the General Assembly itself. The revitalization process has continued this year, and so have its results. We saw some of them in action last June, with the election of my successor. For the first time, it happened through a system of interactive dialogues with Member States, and I hope that this revitalization process will continue. I want to use this opportunity to once again congratulate the President-elect, Her Excellency Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, and wish her luck for the session ahead.

However, we cannot talk about the trend of reform without mentioning the Security Council, and here I want to share one perspective with members of the General Assembly. As President, I have received many invitations for trips. This has led me to travel to 28 countries, and in every single case without exception I have been faced with questions on the reform of the Security Council. That is a process that falls to Member States. I do want to share what I saw and heard outside this building. The work of the Security Council is a matter of life and death for too many people. The entire Organization is judged by it, and as we decide how to move forward the eyes of the world are watching us.

The fifth trend I want to highlight today is not a good one, because, frankly, I think that space for dialogue is closing and that to me is very worrying. The entire Organization was founded on dialogue and this very Hall was intended as a place where world Powers could talk through differences instead of taking them to the battlefield. Dialogue leads to results. That is why, in February, we watched a joint Korean team playing in the Winter Olympics. It is why peace has returned to Colombia after five decades of war, and it is why in January last year political turmoil in The Gambia did not turn violent. But for dialogue to work, it must be real.

I do not think we can generate real dialogue from shouting down the opposition, sticking to prepared scripts or repeating our own position again and again. We certainly cannot generate real dialogue by refusing to even engage in the first place. What would happen

if we all said that we would talk only to those who agree with us, or if we froze out anyone with different opinions, or if we put our hands over our ears and shouted louder? Well, there would be chaos. The Organization would become obsolete. Our differences would turn to animosity or even conflict, and overall we would get nowhere. Dialogue is part of our humanity. Maybe the current political climate has trained us to deliver monologues, but I think that our instincts for dialogue run deeper, and I hope they will prevail.

All of this leads me to the final trend I want to flag today, which is about multilateralism. Dialogue is how we interact, while multilateralism is who we interact with and what format we use. But again, the trend is not positive. Multilateralism is, I believe, under threat. We created this international system in 1945 as a direct response to the horrors of the Second World War. Unfortunately, some of its most fundamental principles are being eroded from beneath us. For example, over seven decades ago, we decided against exclusion, so we made the United Nations into what has become the most inclusive organization in the world, with 193 Member States. Now, however, we are seeing a return to the exclusive clubs of the past. A preference for bilateralism, or small alliances, is becoming dangerously common.

Also in 1945, we decided that a common set of rules should bind us all. Now, however, our rules-based system is under attack. Some seem willing to return to a world in which rules are set by those with the most power. We finally came to the realization after the Second World War that if every country pursued its own agenda, we all risked destruction, but that if, instead, we worked together, we could all move forward.

Now, however, we seem to have forgotten that. It is clear that we live in a complex, uncertain world. That is why it is so tempting to go it alone, to pull up our drawbridges, to wall ourselves in, to focus on our own defences and to let everyone else fend for themselves. Some of us are giving in to that temptation, but history tells us that this is not the way forward. It tells us that, actually, that could be the way back to a world we thought we would never see again. There is still time to counter this trend. I hope that we do not have to wait for disaster to teach us that multilateralism is the only way.

I think we are at a crossroads, and we need to make some tough choices. We can choose a better life for everyone or we can take the road of growing inequalities and broken promises. We can choose a new approach for peace or we can take the road that will bring more human suffering. We can turn current trends into opportunities — from the movement of people to the advance of climate change — or we can turn down the wrong path and turn on each other instead of working together.

I think I will conclude here. I have many people to thank for their work over the past year — too many, in fact — so I am going to save that for my own time. Instead, I want to end by saying that it has been an honour and a privilege to serve as the President of the General Assembly and the representative of its members over the past year. This might be my last speech, but it will not be the last time the Assembly sees me. In fact, I will be back next week, sitting in one of those chairs.

I will end with a quote from Nelson Mandela. It comes from his final address to the General Assembly.

> "I will continue to entertain the hope that there has emerged a cadre of leaders in my own country and region, on my continent and in the world, which will not allow that any should be denied their freedom, as we were; that any should be turned into refugees, as we were; that any should be condemned to go hungry, as we were; that any should be stripped of their human dignity, as we were." (*A/53/PV.7, p.16*)

The stakes are high. We need to take the right road. To do that, we will need leadership. We will also need vision. I hope we will see both next week when our Heads of State and Government gather in this Hall. I wish members good luck for the seventy-third session and the years ahead for our United Nations.

The members of the General Assembly expressed their thanks to President Lajčák by acclamation.

The President: As we are now coming to the end of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, I now invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation, as is our custom.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/305, of 13 September 2016, I now invite Her Excellency Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President-elect of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, to take the oath of office.

The President-elect (*spoke in Spanish*): I solemnly declare that I shall truthfully perform my duties and

exercise the functions entrusted to me as President of the General Assembly of the United Nations in all loyalty, discretion and conscience, and that I shall discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interest of the United Nations only in view and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the code of ethics for the President of the General Assembly, without seeking or accepting any instruction in regard to the performance of my duties from any Government or other source external to the Organization.

Closure of the seventy-second session

The President: I would now like to invite the President-elect of the seventy-third session to meet me at the side of the rostrum for the handing over of the gavel.

I declare closed the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.